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SEVENTY YEARS IN DOXE

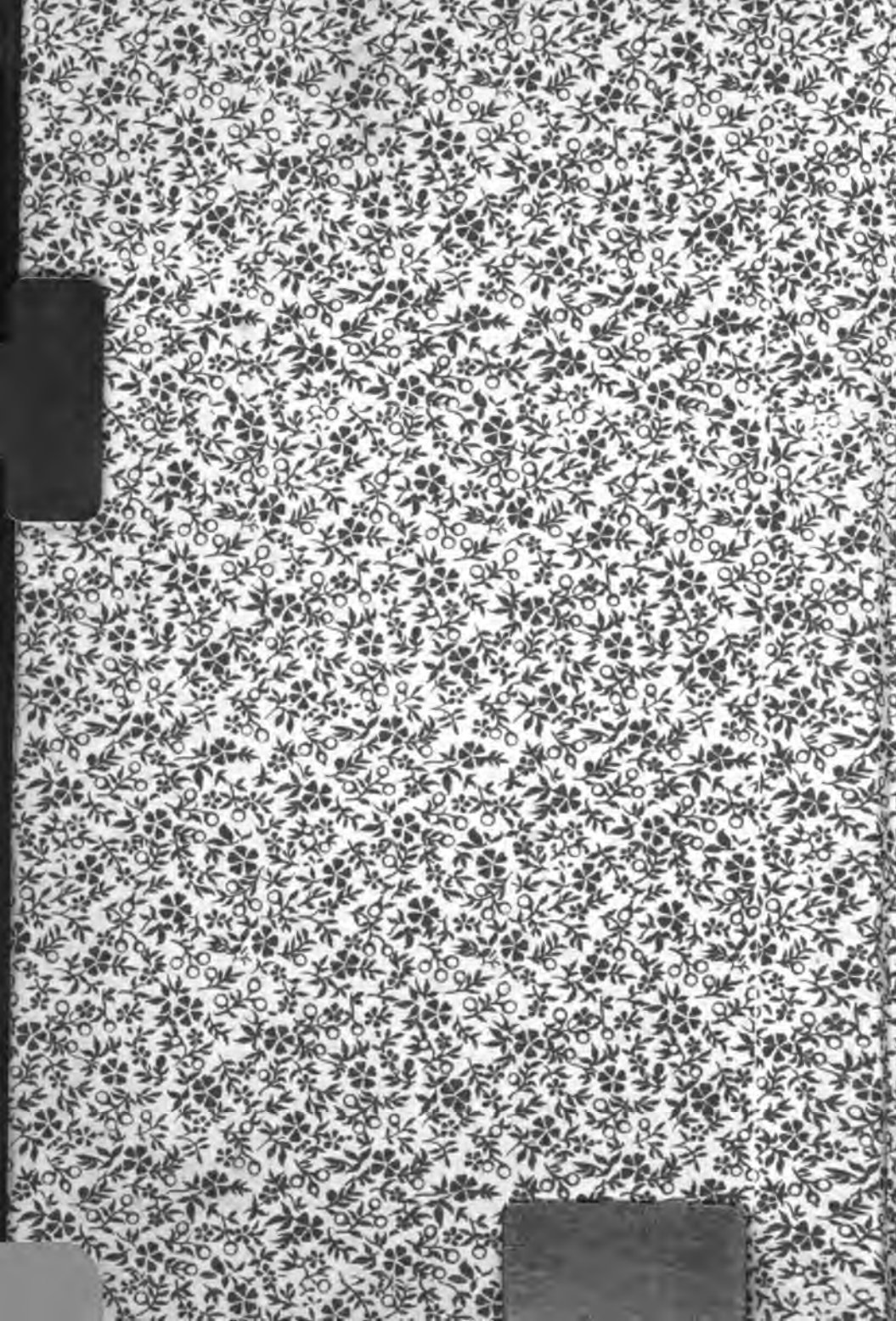
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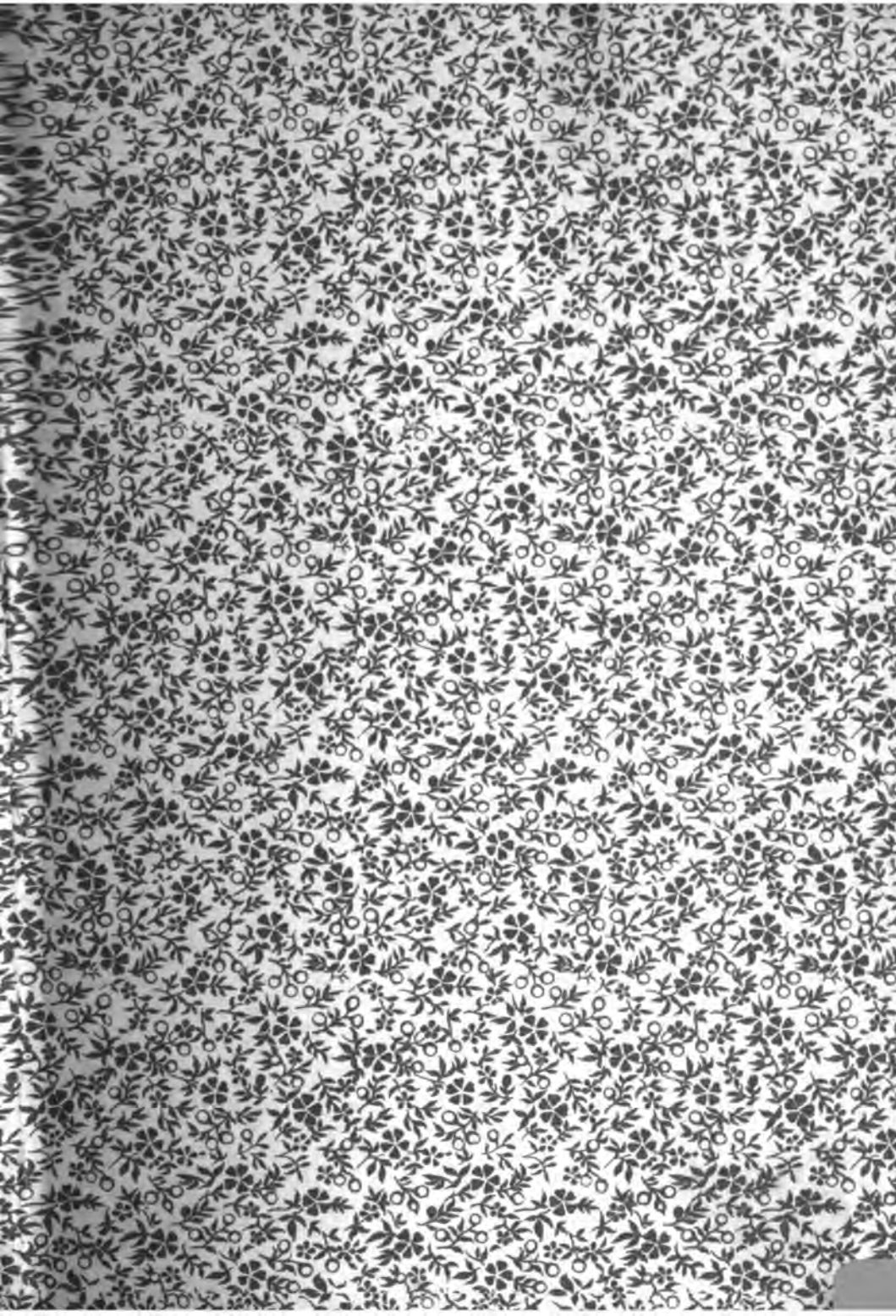
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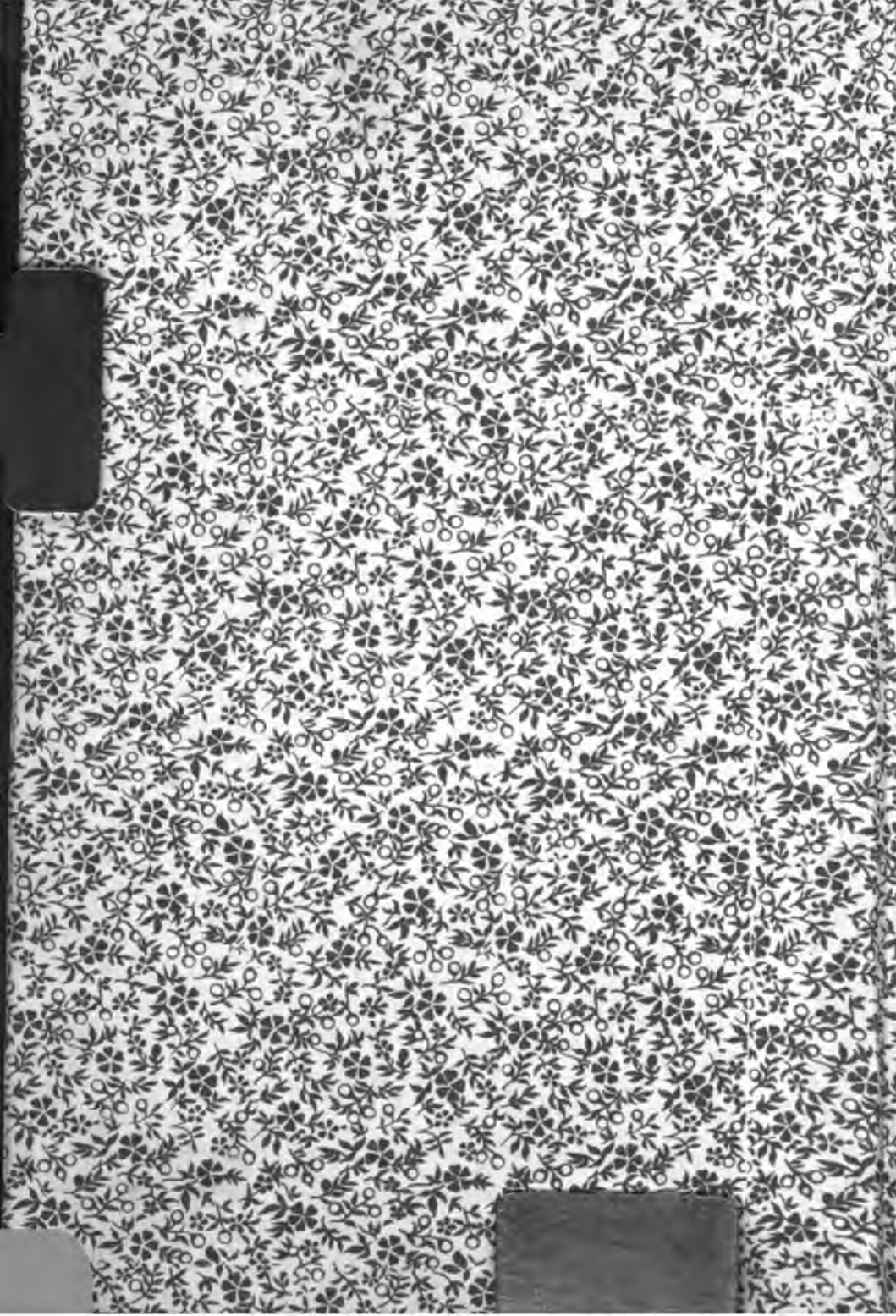


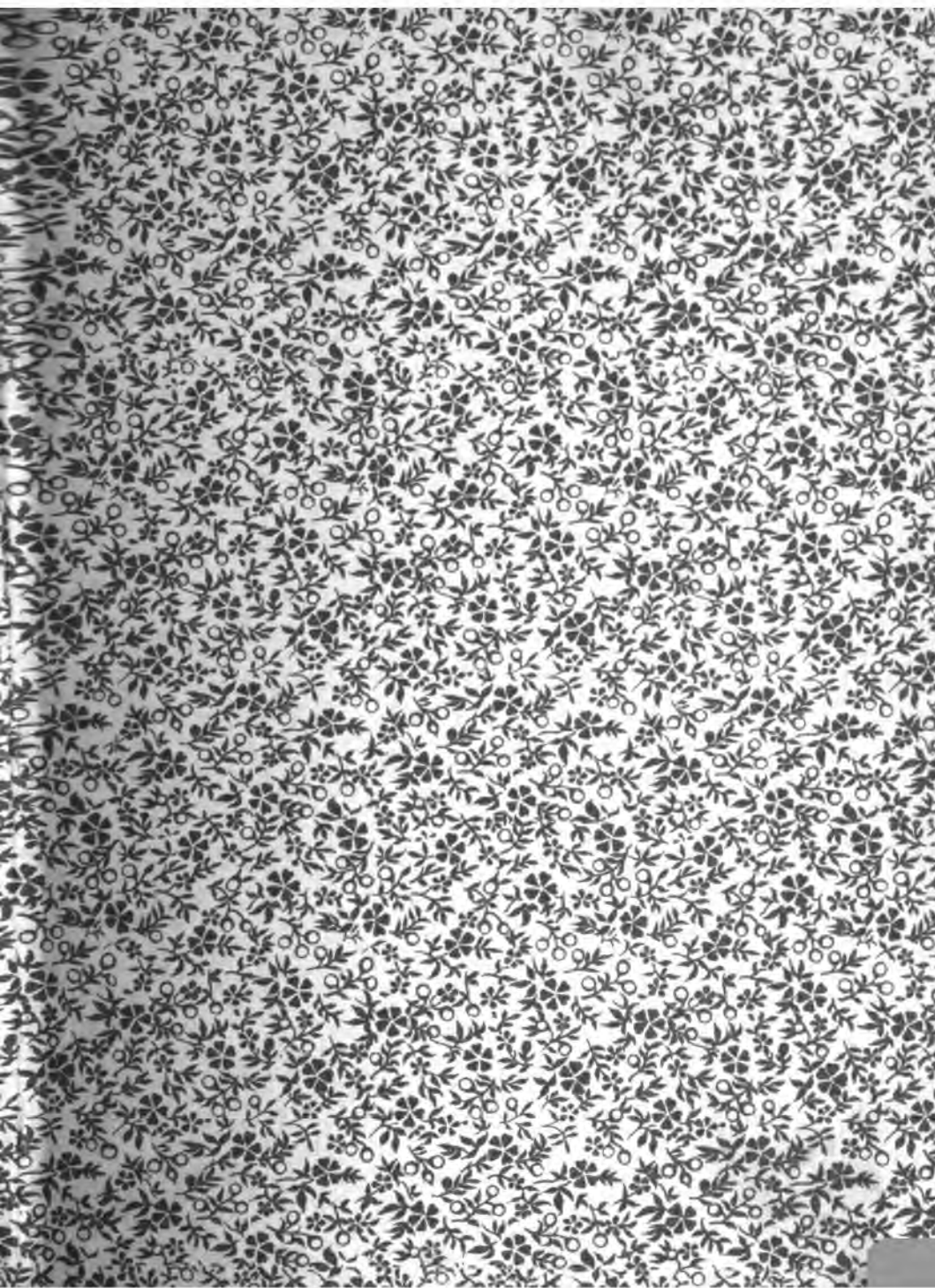
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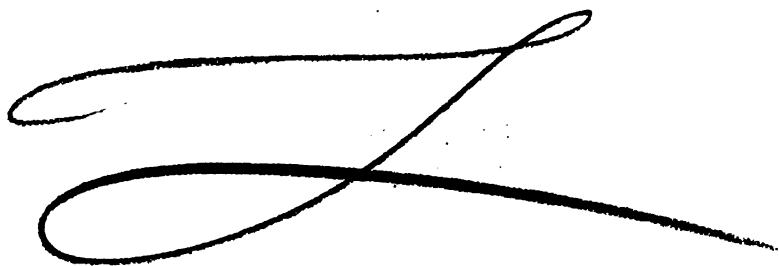


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***RECOLLECTIONS OF AN OLD MAN  
SEVENTY YEARS IN DIXIE  
1827-1897***



*RECOLLECTIONS OF AN OLD MAN  
SEVENTY YEARS IN DIXIE  
1827-1897*









*D. Sullins-*

# RECOLLECTIONS OF AN OLD MAN

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Seventy Years in Dixie

1827-1897

BY

D. SULLINS

CLEVELAND

TENN.



1910

THE KING PRINTING COMPANY

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## INTRODUCTION



**T**HOUGH not an old man, my memory goes back for somewhat more than half a century. The things that happened then are as clear in my mind as if they took place only yesterday.

In 1854-55, or thereabouts, Brother Sullins—they did not call any preacher Doctor, except Sam'l Patton, those days—was station preacher in my native town of Jonesboro. How distinctly he stands out before me as he then was: six feet and over tall, with a great shock of cold black hair on his head, blue-grey eyes that kindled when he talked to you, and a voice that could be as caressing as a mother's and as martial as a general's on the field of battle.

My mother was a Methodist of the old pattern, and Brother Sullins was often in the home. Two of my sisters went to school to him and loved him dearly. In social life he was a charmer, often breaking out into

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## *Introduction*

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mirthful stories. Now and then he did not hesitate to play the boy. But for the scruples of his flock, I am sure he would have been glad on the frosty October mornings to follow the hounds after a fox; for the breath of the country was in his nostrils.

He was even then a wonderful preacher; at least there was one little boy in his congregation that thought so. But I loved best to hear him exhort and sing. Once in the midst of a great revival, he came down out of the pulpit, his arms outstretched, the tears streaming from his eyes, and walked up and down the aisles, beseeching his hearers to accept Christ. There was nothing studied in it, and the spontaneity of it thrilled me. I wonder if he dreamed how much he was stirring my childish heart. And how he could sing! There were no choirs in those days, and he did not need one, as he was entirely competent to "set and carry" any tune. Now and then he would sing a solo before the morning service, usually one of the great old Methodist hymns; but occasionally something new.

When he went away, everybody was sorry;

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## *Introduction*

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the whole town was devoted to him. It was a long, long time ago! One whole generation has since passed into eternity, and a large part of another. But in the providence of God, Brother Sullins—now and for many years Doctor Sullins—still lingers with us; the old man eloquent of the Holston Conference, every man's friend and the friend of every man. More than four score years have passed over his head. He has been preacher, teacher, soldier.

A few years ago, at the urgent request of many friends, he began to write some reminiscences of his early life for publication in *The Midland Methodist*. He will not be offended when I say that even those who knew him best were surprised at the facility with which he used his pen. They had recognized him as an almost incomparable orator, but that very fact had perhaps blinded them to his other gifts. Anyhow the reminiscences were eagerly read, with a constant demand for more. Ever since the series ended there has been a succession of inquiries as to whether they would not be put into a book.



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## *Introduction*

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And here they are! From New River to Lookout Mountain, they will be read again and again, often with tears and sometimes with laughter. I take great pleasure in introducing them to the general public. The man who wrote these papers ought to have written more.

*E. E. Hoss,*

NASHVILLE, TENN.

February 14th, 1916.

## PREFACE.



AFTER what Bishop Hoss has said in the introduction to these Recollections, and Dr. Burrow, who was editor of *The Midland Methodist* while they were passing through its columns, said, it is not necessary to explain further, the why, and the how, of this little book. It will be seen also that the first chapter is largely prefatory. Only this I will say, that but for the repeated requests of Dr. Burrow and other friends, for some reminiscences, they would never have been begun, and but for encouragement, after the first few chapters had appeared, they would never have been continued. Their appearance in this book form, is in compliance with a request of the Holston Conference in annual session. So I say Brethren, I am not so much publishing a book as that I am publishing my obedience to your wish.

Dr. Burrow and the Conference are responsible for the gathering up and preserving of this "basket of fragments."

CLEVELAND, TENN.,  
February, 1910.

*D. Sullins.*



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# I

## BIOGRAPHICAL



OD willing, I will furnish some brief chapters for our *Midland*, made up of the recollections of a lifetime. This I do at the request of the Editor, and of friends. To go back along the way I have come will be for the most part pleasant enough; for only now and then we shall pass places where I cried when first there, and, thank God! these are few and far between; while long stretches of sunshine, barely flecked with shadows, make up the rest of the way. My purpose is to write recollections of the times in which I have lived, and of some of the men and women I have known personally, and preach a little as I go along. I can hardly suppose that my individual career by itself would interest the reading public; but interwoven with the men and times of the last eighty years, it may become worth reading. I always want to know who is talking, as well as what he is talking about.



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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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So I hope it will not be set down to my vanity if in this opening chapter I introduce myself by a little autobiography and some family traditions and ancestral history.

I was born two miles west of Athens, McMinn County, Tenn., in July, 1827. And I was well born. That is, I was born of well developed, healthy, sensible, religious parents, and on a farm. All of which is much in my favor, but nothing to my credit. And here I begin thus early to thank God. First, that I was born at all, and then that I was not born cross-eyed nor club-footed nor deaf nor blind nor of *cranky, irreligious parents*. That last clause is a climax. I fear that we stalwart men and graceful women, each with five good senses, a sound body, and lithe limbs, do not sufficiently appreciate the *parental* care.

My ancestors were Scotch-Irish. I remember while yet a boy to have heard my father tell that somewhere about 1750 his father and two brothers, came from "the old country" to America. These brothers were Scotch-Irish, and all unmarried. They separated after they arrived in this country. One stopped in Pennsylvania, and married there; one went to North Carolina, married,

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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and located near Guilford Courthouse; the third came to Virginia, married a Miss Mays in Halifax County, and settled on Dan River. This was my grandfather. Here my father was born. When he was twelve years old, his father came, among the first pioneers, to Tennessee, and settled on Poplar Creek, in Knox (now Roane) County, near Oliver Springs, in 1795. Here my father grew up to manhood in the wilderness of the new country. He had one brother (Joseph) and three sisters. These sisters married Dr. William Farmer, Joseph Stubblefield and William Gent. Some of the descendants of these families are still here in East Tennessee. Rev. Joseph A. Stubblefield, D. D., who for many years was President of Centenary Female College, is the grandson of the Stubblefield who married my paternal aunt.

There were no schools in those days, save an occasional "subscription school," kept in the winter. Father told us that he attended one of these and learned to spell a little. This, he said, was all the schooling he ever got. When he was twenty-one he married my mother, Miss Rebecca Mitchell, daughter of Rev. Morris Mitchell, a pioneer local

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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preacher of the Methodist Church. I think he was of Irish descent. His wife was probably German. They lived on the south side of the Holston River, two miles above Lenoir's Ferry, now Lenoir City. The river was called Holston then as far down as the mouth of the Little Tennessee River. There it took the name of Tennessee. The Little Tennessee was the northern boundary of what was known as the Cherokee Hunting Ground. When father married, he rented the ferry and the island at the mouth of the Little Tennessee, built a cabin close by, and brought mother there. So there was only the small river between them and the Indians. Along on their side of the river the Indians had many little towns—Coyalee, Tomotlee, Choitee, Tellico, and some others—and close by was the ill-fated Fort Loudon, of sad history. Here in father's cabin were born seven of my brothers and sisters; there were thirteen of us, all told—a good, honest family, you see.

My mother was the youngest of a large family of brothers and sisters. My father married her when she was sixteen years old. He was not religious then, but mother was.

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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In those days the preachers used to call on the women sometimes to lead in prayer. My mother was known as the "praying young woman on the south side of the river." O, how I have heard her pray a whole camp meeting onto its feet! "And there was the sound of going in the mulberry trees." It was said at her funeral that "her father, four brothers, two sons, and eleven nephews were Methodist preachers." It was in the blood of that old pioneer local preacher and his blessed old wife, and it had come down through their children and children's children for four generations; and if there has ever been a pauper or a "jail bird" among them, I have never heard of it. This is our family testimony for the truth of God's promise of "mercy unto children and children's children to such as fear him." Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

## II

### *EARLY HISTORY*



ON the other side of the river from Grandfather Mitchell's, and a little above, lived John Winton, the father of a large and influential family often mentioned in the journal of Bishop Asbury. Two of his sons, William and James, married sisters of my mother, and John McClure married another. Soon after this, grandfather, together with most of his family, moved to Missouri and located near Springfield. Here and hereabouts the Mitchells and Wintons and McClures gathered somewhere in the thirties. Missouri was called the "Far West" then. I recollect that my father paid fifty cents postage on letters sent them, and this recalls a remark in one of grandfather's letters to mother. He was a very fat man—so fat that he could not tie his own shoes—and, wanting mother to know that he was doing well in the Far West, said: "Rebecca, I am as fat as a buck, but cannot jump quite so high." This made us

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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children laugh. Missouri Methodism owes much to these Mitchells and Wintons and McClures. Their names are found on almost every page of her wonderful history from that day to this, on districts and circuits and missions, home and foreign, and in schools and colleges, on down to the present editor of the *Christian Advocate*. (Cousin George, I did not mean anything but a smile by tailing out that last sentence with an anticlimax. But don't let your wife see it. She and I are good friends now, and I want us to continue so until we meet over the river.)

I was at the funeral of John Winton. His death occurred during a camp meeting at old Muddy Creek, near his home. My brother, Timothy, was presiding elder, and had charge of the meeting. Mr. Winton's remains were brought to the camp ground, and brother conducted the services in the presence of a very large assembly of his devout neighbors. He was the father of the two Wintons who married my aunts, Mary and Rhoda. William Winton, who married my Aunt Mary, went to Missouri about 1837. He was the father of Rev. George Mitchell Winton, who for more than forty years stood



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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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on the firing line of our Methodism in the Middle West, and who in turn was the father of Rev. George B. Winton, D. D., present editor of the *Nashville Christian Advocate*. James Winton, who married my Aunt Rhoda, did not go West when the other members of his family did. He lived at Winton's Island, twelve miles below Kingston, on the Tennessee River. Here he brought up a large family of sons and daughters. The oldest son was Rev. Wiley B. Winton, who for many years was a member of the Holston Conference, and one of the very best preachers ever among us—a gentle, sweet-spirited, and lovable man. His eyes failing, he took the superannuated relation, and went with his family to Missouri, but kept his membership with us till he died. His wife was an honored claimant on our Conference fund till her death, a few years ago. William M. Winton, of Missouri, Wiley B. Winton and Timothy Sullins, of Holston, were cousins. The first two were double cousins. And no general ever had a trio of marshals truer or braver than were these captains. "One blast of their bugle horn was worth a thousand men." There were giants in those days. Preach? Ah, how they did preach

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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and exhort and pray and sing! Sons of thunder and consolation, they were all good singers. O, to hear them again! And I expect to, "some sweet day," in the swelling chorus of celestial singers. Amen.

When my father married, he rented Lenoir's Ferry and the big island at the mouth of the Little Tennessee, built a cabin, and brought mother to it. Here they began their life work. They used to tell us what they had to begin with. Father had a cow and mother a set of pewter tableware, a wedding portion from her father. I remember that some of the plates were in the family when I was "getting a big boy," and particularly a basin which was used in the yard for watering the chickens—a good thing. It did not rust, and was so heavy that a hen could not turn it over and not deep enough to drown the little ones. Here they lived until the Hiwassee land sales, in 1819. These lands included the Indian hunting ground between the Hiwassee and the Little Tennessee. Father bought of the State one hundred and sixty acres two miles west of Athens, in McMinn County, and brought his family to it.

The country was then an unbroken wilder-

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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ness. Father said there was "not a stick amiss" where Athens now is. Here another cabin was built with unhewn logs, clapboard roof, puncheon floor, and wooden chimney. I remember this cabin, though I was not born in it. It was moved to another part of the farm, and a renter lived in it when I was a child. When father got to his new possessions with his stock, it was all woods. So they cut some saplings and made a sort of enclosure for the cattle for the night, and then in the morning salted them and let them go to the "range." After a few years, a large two-story house was built of hewn logs, with a brick chimney. On the back of the chimney, some ten feet up, is the date of its erection, 1825. This house still stands. Here I was born and brought up. There were but few preaching places in those days, so father left the lower room of his house without a partition, which made a good place for the neighbors to meet for preaching and prayer and class meetings. Father kept some benches packed away for use on such occasions. I helped to bring them in and arrange them when the people came to preaching.

I remember to have heard Bishop Morris

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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preach at our house once. It was the day after the Conference closed at Madisonville, Tenn., 1837. He came in the evening seventeen miles, and preached at night. He was the first Bishop I ever saw. I remember well how he looked as he stood up by the old family clock, which was "taller by half" than the Bishop himself. Here in this house I was born, and here cluster all the sweet associations of childhood and youth—father and mother, brothers and sisters, the fields and the orchard, the big forest oaks in the yard, the well with its wooden pump, and the spring house by it, the horses and my own pretty colt which father gave me for my own—aye, and my pack of dogs, whose leader and chief was True Boy. He was a wise old dog, and merited his name. I learned many things from him, of which I may tell you later, maybe.

But of all the recollections of my childhood, the dearest and most sacred was the gathering of the large family for the morning and evening prayers. I can see them now, all quietly seated while the lesson was being read, and then all stood up to sing. This was father's rule. And oftener, perhaps, than anything else we sang "Father, I Stretch My

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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Hands to Thee," to the tune of "Mear." But I told you above that father was not religious when he married mother. That was true. And indeed I think that what religious bent there was in our family was largely due to the Mitchell blood and training in mother. The Sullins stock in my father was strongly marked by the blood of his Virginia mother, Mary Mays. The Mayses were more noted for their love of fine horses, fox dogs, and handsome women, than for their piety. Yes, and I know one living grandson of Mary Mays in whom have always been some troublesome streaks of fondness for these things. Then how did my unconverted father come to be holding family prayers? Well, mother told me, in substance, this:

### III

#### *OUR FAMILY ALTAR*



T was not long after marriage till father, through the exhortations of grandfather and the prayers of mother, was deeply convicted and was induced to join the Church as a "seeker on probation." Matters stood thus for some time. But the children were growing up, and mother was much concerned about them. So in the middle of a sleepless night of prayer she said to father: "Nathan, we can never bring up the children right without family prayers." "Well," said father, "what are we to do, Becky? I can't pray." But mother insisted that he could and ought to, and then added: "If you will try, I will take it time about with you holding prayers." That brought the question to an issue, and so finally father, almost with a groan, said: "I'll try." The die was cast. So next morning mother held prayers. Father went to his work. He plowed and prayed all that day, he said. After

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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supper mother got the children all quiet, and said: "Nathan, we are ready for prayers." Father dropped on his knees and, stammering and choking, began. Soon, under a crushing sense of sin and helplessness, he began to confess and cry for pardoning mercy. Mother prayed and cried, and the Comforter came and light broke in and father was converted at family prayers. Amen and amen! And that forever settled the question of family prayers at our house. No wonder! It settled many other things in the family, too, as it always will in any family. Of the thirteen children born in the home, eleven have already "fought the good fight" and gone to join father and mother in glory. Today there is a family altar in the home of every living child and every grandchild, and every great-grandchild old enough to know and love Jesus is a Christian and in the Church, as far as I know. Here I want to bear testimony to the honor of my brothers—they are all dead now. I never heard a profane oath from the lips of one of them. So much for a faithful family altar. And still more. There are but two of us living. One is my youngest sister, Mrs. Rebecca Dodson, of Knoxville, Tenn., the mother of a religious

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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family. We are old, but we are still singing: "Father, I Stretch My Hands to Thee." The day is far spent; but our faces are turned toward home, and we expect to get there by sundown.

If these reminiscences are to be continued, I must leave the field of tradition and write from memory. And here let me beg the reader of these crude sentences to bear in mind that I am not writing history or tabulated statistics for books; but am writing of men and things carried in memory through this turbulent world, many of them for seventy years and more. My very earliest recollections of persons and things, outside of the family, are of the preachers who came to our house and of the meetings they held—"circuit preaching," quarterly meetings, and especially camp meetings. We lived in the Athens Circuit, which had some twenty preaching places. Athens was in the circuit then. Indeed, there were perhaps not a half dozen stations in the bounds of the Conference, including the two districts in North Carolina. We generally had two preachers, a senior and a junior. I recall very vividly the first preachers I ever saw at our house. It was just after an Annual Conference. The coming of an Annual Conference



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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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in those days was a memorable event; for, as a rule, the preachers were changed every year, and we looked for a new man, except the presiding elders. The Conference had been in session several days, somewhere up the country, and it was time the new preachers were putting in their appearance. Father had taken me, a boy eight or ten years old, out on the farm to help him lay a fence worm. I could put a rock or a chunk under the end of the rail to level it where the ground was uneven. The house was in full view on the hill, among the big oaks a quarter of a mile away. It was nearly dinner time when we saw two men ride up to the house, hitch, and go in. This was not strange; for we lived on the main road leading to the Indian Territory, just across the Hiwassee River, twelve miles away, and travelers often stopped with us. But the fact that mother did not blow the horn for some one to take care of the horses was significant. Very soon the men came out and started toward the barn with their horses. Father said: "I expect they are preachers going from the Conference." The preachers put up their own horses in those days when the hands were in the fields.

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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Not long after we saw them coming out to us. I was curious to see them. One of them was a long, loose-jointed, careless-looking man with a very sallow, sole-leather colored face, and no beard, and was evidently the older man. The other was a smaller man, closely built, had a vigorous, nervous step, and was looking everywhere; and as he came down the hill he picked up a rock and threw at a bird, like a boy. As they came up to us, the older man held out a long, bony hand that looked like it might have been disjointed at the wrist and bunglingly reset, and in a kind, frank tone of voice said: "And this is Brother Sullins? Glad to see you. My name is Haskew. Let me introduce Brother Brownlow." And Brownlow shook hands with father and turned and pinched my ear.

Of course, the transaction made a lasting impression on me, and I recollect Joseph Haskew and William G. Brownlow as the first preachers seen at our house. They were our circuit riders for that year, and for the next fifty years I knew them well. Joseph Haskew was for many years one of the most popular and efficient preachers in the Holston Conference. A good man, full of faith and the

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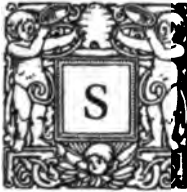
## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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Holy Ghost, he was a good preacher, but a better exhorter. He was by nature both a wag and a wit. I always loved him; for he waited on himself, put up and caught his own horse; and if he wanted a fire, he got the wood and made it. I liked that. Many pleasing stories are told of his kind ways and witty words. You can find them in the "History of Holston Methodism," by Dr. R. N. Price. (Smith & Lamar, \$1.25.) Rev. W. G. Brownlow was altogether one of the most remarkable men our Holston country ever produced. But for me to write of him is to unkindly assume that the reader is ignorant of the common history of the country. He was a mighty man with both tongue and pen, as many had occasion to know. He was not so lovable a man as Haskew. I loved Haskew all the time, but Brownlow part of the time only. I shall try to tell you of their camp meetings next.

## IV

### *CAMP MEETINGS*



SEVENTY years ago camp meetings were very common here in these Holston hills between the Great Smokies on the east and the Cumberland Mountains on the west. The Methodists took the lead, but were closely followed by the Presbyterians and Baptists. Taking our circuit for example, there were three Methodist camp grounds, two Presbyterian, and one Baptist. And it was about the same on other charges in the district. So it was not uncommon to find twelve or fifteen in one presiding elder's district, to be held along from the middle of August to the last of September. These meetings have almost disappeared in the last few years. A brief account of them may not be uninteresting. Our old people who know all about them, why they were established and how conducted, need not take time to read this chapter of recollections. It is written more for the young people, who know little or nothing

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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about their origin, the why and the what and the how of those great religious gatherings.

Let us make it very clear in the outset to our young friends that they were not great annual assemblies for social enjoyment and pleasure. True, there was a measure of social pleasure when old friends and neighbors who rarely met elsewhere came with their families and tented side by side for days together. But these meetings had their origin in a profound concern for the souls of men, to build up the faith of believers and call sinners to repentance. The particular form of service as seen in the camp meetings was not an accident, but the deliberate adoption of the best methods under existing conditions to compass the end in view—the salvation of men. And they did it gloriously. Some argue that their discontinuance is an evidence that the Church is less concerned now than then, but this is perhaps not true. Conditions have changed. Then churches were few and small; pastors were overworked on large circuits sparsely settled; religious workers, in any given neighborhood, were few and timid. Camp meetings met these conditions. First, by providing comfortable places large enough for whole com-

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munities to worship together, and thus giving the pastors an opportunity to see and serve their people, gathered from far and near. Then they called Christian workers from different neighborhoods to sustain the song and prayer services and instruct penitents. They created interest enough to bring the scattered people from the fields and flocks to the place of worship. In a word, they were great religious rallies.

The recollections of my boyhood are full of these camp meeting occasions. Our camp ground was at Cedar Springs. There was a small log church here, and here my father and Jacob Hoss, a kinsman of the Bishop, built a shed one hundred and twenty-five feet long and seventy-five feet wide, with wings on hinges. When these wings were down, it was a great house; and when up, would seat two thousand. The tents were rude shacks made of logs, many of them with bark on. There were no fireplaces. Beds were scaffolds along the sides of the tents. All floors were dirt, covered with straw. Some used sawdust, but I liked the straw better. It had associated with it the smell of the fields and the bantering ring of the reapers' blades and the metheglin that

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mother made for the three-o'clock lunch for the harvesters and the cheery whistle of Bob White from his rail perch, piping to his old mate on the nest hard by. So I liked the straw better. We and our neighbors usually moved to the camp ground on Friday, which was fast day. At night, after things were arranged in the tents, we had short introductory services under the shed. Shed; pavilion, and auditorium belonged to a later period. At this service the leader, who was usually the presiding elder, announced the regulations for the government of the meeting. "The ground and groves on the south are reserved for the women, and those on the north for the men," was generally the first rule. The second rule was: "The women will occupy the seats on the right of the center aisle in the congregation; the men, those on the left." And this rule was strictly observed. If a man should take a seat on the side assigned to the women, some officer would quietly call his attention to the rule in a general way. If this modest hint did not move him, he was waited on and told plainly that he must take his seat on the other side of the aisle. I saw this done again and again. These were queer old ways our

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fathers had. But they were wise, and broke up much of the whispering and giggling which disturb public worship often in promiscuous assemblies.

We were next told that at the first sound of the horn all must get up and prepare for the day. (Mother took her dinner horn and hung it in the preacher's tent.) This first horn was blown about sunup if one of the young preachers had to blow it; but if Uncle Haskew had it in charge, it sounded out about the peep of day. All subsequent soundings of the horn were to call the people to worship. At this time all persons must leave the tent, save one, and the tent be closed. The hours for service were 9:30, 11, 3, and "candle-lighting." At night the whole encampment was lighted up with candles under the shed, and around it with blazing pine knots. These candles were fastened to the posts and set on the pulpit board. It was the special duty of some one to keep the pine knots going. At the close of the three-o'clock service the people were exhorted and urged to go to the grove and form praying-circles, women and men to their separate groves. And here was done much hand-to-hand and heart-to-heart work. Neighbor with



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neighbor and neighbor's children, with songs and prayers and exhortations and personal pleadings, out in the woods with God at the holy, quiet hour of sunset. O, what scenes I have witnessed and what thrills of pious joy have I felt on these occasions, boy as I was! And now, old man as I am, as I walk back in memory over those holy hours, my soul "doth magnify the Lord."

Often when there was a little lull in our grove we would hear the women over in theirs, led on by some modern Miriam, singing and shouting. And we knew and felt that God was among them and that his hosts were pressing the enemy and the cry of victory was in the air. Listen! I can hear them now over the seventy intervening years, singing:

"Our bondage here will end by and by,  
by and by ;  
From Egypt's yoke set free,  
hail the glorious jubilee,  
And to Canaan we'll return by and by,  
by and by."

These praying groups would sometimes return to the encampment about dusk singing, bringing a half dozen penitents, and when they

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met at the altar, there was the shout of a king in the camp. Usually under these conditions we had no preaching that night. The leader would throw his voice over the great, surging mass of people and invite sinners to come to Jesus. No preaching and no supper that night. The tenters would keep a pot of coffee hot out at the back of their tents for the workers. The altar service would last all night. I have seen more than one man converted at daybreak, as Jacob was at the Jabbok, after an all-night's wrestle with the angel.

Here is a custom which was wise but queer, the benediction was never pronounced until the close of the last service of the meeting. Why? Well, this was then a new country. There were many rude, bad men in it, and whisky made them worse. We needed the protection of the State as a worshipping assembly. So we never closed the services, but were a worshipping people all the while we were there.

There are very many other interesting features left out of this report of camp meetings of seventy years ago. It is long enough. Let us have the benediction and close and go home to do better and be better, having been to

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another camp meeting. One smile before we go. As I run back in thought to those days there is one incident recalled which still provokes a smile. The old church was used for the preacher's tent. Mother was a sort of self-appointed superintendent there to see that these men of God had at least moderate comforts: straw for their beds; a bucket and a dipper; a good big lump of home-made soap, which was hardened by putting salt in it as we stirred it off; some home-made flax towels, which sometimes scratched a little if you rubbed hard; and a wash pan for those who did not want to walk down to the spring with Uncle Haskew to wash. As the clans gathered on Saturday, mother slipped off to reconnoiter, to count noses and beds. When she came back, she said to father: "Nathan, we must take another bed up to the preacher's tent." "Well," said father, "we'll attend to it after supper." Now Mr. Workman, clerk of the court in town, two miles away, was in the habit of riding out to attend night services. He was a very fleshy man—full, very full in the chest and body, too—and being very fat, he enjoyed a white vest, which he wore cut long and pulled well down in the front, with his coat

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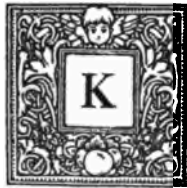
## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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thrown back. He had just arrived and hitched his horse at the rear of our tent and was walking up slowly toward the preacher's tent, when father came to the door and, peering into the twilight, stood a moment, and then, turning to mother, said: "Becky, we need not take another bed to the preacher's. I see some one going up with one now." This brought mother to the door to see who might be meddling with her business. In a moment she began to laugh, and father said: "What are you laughing at?" "Why," she said, "that is not a man carrying a bed; it is Mr. Sam. Workman and his long white vest." Father could not see well in the twilight. But we children laughed with mother.

V

*CAMP MEETINGS—CONTINUED*



IND reader of these recollections, I thought that when we parted at the close of the camp meeting which we attended in the last chapter that I had said what I had to say on the subject; but camp meetings were a great thing with me when I was a boy, and very many scenes and occurrences come up for notice. So if I tell the whole truth they must come in. Among the well-remembered things that interested me was the gathering of people from far and near, and then the taking care of them when they came. Besides the tenters, many came in covered wagons, bringing their provisions and a few cooking vessels with them. These did their own cooking by a fire built by a stump or log, slept in their wagons, and so took care of themselves. I have seen as many as twenty or thirty of such groups scattered around in the groves at the same time. Many others came on horseback, the women with big satchels

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hanging on the horns of their saddles. These were received as visitors and taken care of by the tent holders. I have known my father to set apart a good piece of pasture where there were water and a strong fence, where we turned the horses, fifteen or twenty sometimes. It will appear to the thoughtful that these meetings made large demands on the liberality and generosity of the tent holders and the neighbors near by. It was no child's play to take care of the hundreds of men and women and horses who gathered on these occasions for days together—ten to fifteen days sometimes. They generally began on Friday, and closed Tuesday or Wednesday following. But when the Lord was graciously present, killing and making alive, they were carried over two Sundays. In such cases the preachers and tenters were called together to consult as to what should be done.

I recall several such instances. But one especially impressed itself upon me. It was at Cane Creek, in my own county, about 1842 or 1843. The meeting had been one of great power. One Monday night the atmosphere seemed charged, as it were, with the awful presence and power of God. Sinners walked

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about softly and with solemn faces, and the service lasted nearly all night. Tuesday morning the preachers and the tent holders came together for consultation, and after serious counsel agreed to go on through the week. This necessitated additional preparations to care for the many then present and others likely to come. And so the tenters got together just inside the inclosure by the shed for a conference. They formed a ring facing to the center, twenty or twenty-five of them—all serious, thoughtful men. A large crowd gathered around them, I, with others, but no one joined them. After the situation had been talked over, it was agreed that certain of them should go home, some to kill a beef, others a hog or two, others to go to the mill for meal and flour, etc.—all to be brought and divided among them as each might need. This settled, there was a minute or two of solemn silence. Then some one suggested a “word of prayer.” Uriah Payne, a local preacher, led the prayer, as I recollect, and we all felt that the Lord heard those men talking to him. The prayer ended, they all stood for a moment, still facing each other in the ring; and then one of them began to laugh, and in a moment the

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laugh flew around that ring as quick as a flash of light, peal after peal. This lasted a minute or two, and then all was as solemn and silent as death. Then one began a half-smothered laugh, like he was trying to keep it down, and with that away went the laugh around the group in absolute convulsions. They would lean forward until their heads almost touched each other, and then backward, while peals of laughter burst in concert from each until they almost lost their breath. This strange proceeding lasted ten or fifteen minutes. Now what was most strange was that this laughter did not produce levity in any beholder. It was a very solemn scene. Somehow it was pleasant to be there, but no one saw anything ludicrous. I had seen what they called the "trance" several times when the person lay as dead for hours and then sprang up shouting the praise of God. But this was a purely laughing exercise. I had never seen it before. But I have seen modifications of it a time or two since. This was twenty or thirty years after the days of the "jerks" or "falling exercise."

What was this? Well, I know; for once in a while on my way I have been enabled by grace



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to so far forget time and self as to just lay all—verily, all—on the altar of service for God and humanity, and then I felt the laugh start in my heart. And I can see away ahead of me where the laugh struck those good men. What was it? Why, this: Those good men had left their farms and shops, canceled all business arrangements, shut up their homes, and taken their families, with their substance, bread and meat, and for ten days had given their entire time and labor to the cause of Christ. And all this with no desire or expectation of ever receiving one dollar in return—all purely for God and their fellow-men. Our God never was, and never will be, behindhand with such men for such unselfish devotion. And so “he filled their mouth with laughter, and their lips with rejoicing.” Sometimes, but not always, the Lord rewards his servants “in kind” for their unselfish devotion to his cause. When Jesse Cunnyingham, father of the late Dr. W. G. E. Cunnyingham, fed a hundred men and horses at a great meeting, some of his neighbors said: “The Methodists will eat Cunnyingham out of house and home yet.” But they did not consider that they would have to bankrupt Cunnyingham’s God before they could do that.

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I knew that good man. He was our neighbor. I heard him preach seventy years ago. He died at a good old age, "full-handed." And the influence of his unselfish light shed a sweet light on all around, like the lingering rays of a setting sun that makes a half hemisphere luminous after its ball is far behind the hills.

Among the wonderful manifestations of the power and work of the Spirit in saving sinners, I recall a scene which I witnessed at a camp meeting at Cedar Springs, where father camped. There was great solemnity felt everywhere, a conscious presence that awed the vast assembly. (A no uncommon thing, be it remembered, when God's people are waiting for him.) Sinners were subdued. There was in the audience a large man—thirty years old, perhaps—a strong, resolute man with a set, determined look, yet much agitated. I saw him get up suddenly and start out of the congregation. He walked eight or ten steps, and then broke into a run, but stopped abruptly, as if seized by a giant, and fell to the ground, crying out at the top of his voice as one stricken with terror. He had not gotten outside of the inclosure. Some of the brethren went to him at once, and got down

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on their knees by him. Those old soldiers did not seem much troubled, but looked rather like they were glad of it. And I believe they were. They knew he was wounded, and where, and they knew the tree that bleeds the balm he needed. So they told him of the cross and the Jesus who died on it for sinners. And Uncle Joe Gaston, the old class leader, began to sing, "Show Pity, Lord; O Lord, Forgive," and to clap his hands, as he was wont to do when things went his way. And we knew the case was hopeful. This was Alexander Robeson. He became a local preacher and was the father of the late Rev. William Robeson, who for fifty years was a member of the Holston Conference.

Thank God for camp meetings *in their season!* More than half of the preachers in the Holston Conference fifty years ago had been converted at camp meetings. And in most instances they were the sons of the fathers and mothers who had tented at these meetings. Somehow the head of the Church seems to have found the men he wanted for pioneer and field work among the sons of these old tent holders.

## VI

### *THE SIMPLE LIFE*



THESE recollections will be very incomplete if, having spent the ever-to-be-remembered days of my childhood and youth on the farm, I do not give a chapter to that period and tell how a farmer and his family lived in those days in this East Tennessee country. I was born in the "Cherokee Hunting Grounds," seven years after the Indians gave it up, with all its bears and wolves and deer and turkeys still roaming over the mountains and valleys. During those seven years the country had been settled up by young families, most of whom had been renters, as father had been. These had, by industry and economy, made and saved enough money to buy a few acres of government land in the woods. Here they built a cabin and began their life work. When I was a boy, they had cleared a few acres around the cabin and about the pens where they stacked the fodder and kept the horses. It will occur

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to the reader that such a citizenship was very homogeneous, and likely to be harmonious. They all worked, knew how to work and how to take care of what they made. They were a sort of brotherhood, and understood and sympathized with each other. If I tell you how we lived, you will know how our neighbors lived. Every man had to get his victuals and clothes off the farm, for there was no other way to get them. We had no market and little use for any, for we consumed what we made. We had almost no money, and but little use for any, as there was nothing to sell or buy. If one had a little more meat or corn or fodder than he needed, and his neighbor was needing it, they bartered some way—gave a colt or a calf for what was necessary to tide them over. I saw much of this done after I was ten years old.

Our home life was the "simple life" long before Mr. Wagner ever wrote it up. The farm, under the management of father, produced what was needed for comfort. He added to his original one hundred and sixty acres till he had a thousand, and almost all of it still in the woods when I was a boy. Father had his own notions about slavery. He

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never would own a negro. But whether these notions grew out of any convictions that slavery as it existed among us was in itself wrong, or out of other and very different considerations, is not quite clear. I think the latter is true. Somehow he never seemed to think that negroes in the family were to be desired. They had to be Hectored to make them worth their keep, and he did not like to boss. I have heard him and mother laugh and tell that Grandfather Mitchell (mother's father) had a negro boy he sometimes took to church with him; but instead of the boy hitching grandfather's horse, it worked the other way, for grandfather would hunt up a swinging limb and hitch the boy's horse to it. They said that grandfather had two or three negroes to wait on, and father could never see much in that to be desired. Then father considered another important fact: he had four boys, ranging in age from sixteen down to ten years, and he had the now almost obsolete idea that it was well for a boy to have something to do and be required to do it. So we boys did the work; and if we failed, then he generally did something memorable, but not put in this chapter.

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There was plenty for us all to do on that thousand acres of forest—grubbing and brush-burning and rail-splitting and fence-making. Yes, and then came the plowing. My, my! Were not those young hickory roots tough? And did not that old plow punch my ribs black and blue? And I had a stone bruise, too; but father never thought that a stone bruise ought to excuse a boy from work, and so I went on my “tippies.” Mother was good on a stone bruise with a big, warm flax seed or mush poultice, or a piece of fat meat at night. In fact, mother knew a heap of things to help a boy when he got hurt—a stumped toe, a splinter under his nail, or a bee sting—but a stone bruise had to run its course. I am by stone bruises like Josh Billings was by boils: “They are not fit to be anywhere but on a stick.” But I never did like them. They say we ought not to talk about folks we do not like, and I think it a good rule.

To meet the numerous wants of his family for food and clothes, almost every farmer had, in addition to his main crops of corn and wheat and oats, vegetables of all kinds, patches of cotton and flax, a flock of sheep, a drove of geese, some hogs, a good milch cow

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or two, a young bullock for beef and his hide for shoes, a few bee-gums, and a little tobacco around by the pigpens. We did not have to fence that, for nothing would eat it but man—and that other big, nasty tobacco worm! Look at this list, and you will see that he had his eye on the coming wants of his family. And well he might, for it all had to come out of the farm. And mother, blessed helpmeet! was just as thoughtful and wise as he to utilize the material furnished by the flocks and farm to feed and clothe us all—cotton and flax from the fields and wool and hides from the flocks. I never had an article of “store clothes” until I was half grown. As for hats, and shoes, we furnished the wool and hides, and old Mr. Blankenship made our wool hats and Uncle Sam. Hogue made the shoes. These were for winter. Our summer hats mother and sisters made of plaited straw. For summer shoes we wore our *calf skins*, as we used to say when we turned barefoot in the spring. Corn was our main crop—corn and hogs, “hog and hominy.” They say now that cotton is king, but not so then. Corn was king.

When the country had to be redeemed from



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the Indians and the forests, corn was king. The farmer who had plenty of corn had both bread and meat for himself and family. Suppose our fathers had had to depend on wheat for their bread? It would have taken them a hundred years longer to reach the Rockies. Only think of a pioneer in the woods depending on wheat for bread. Corn will produce four times as much as wheat per acre, and requires only one-tenth of the seed to seed it down and only one-third of the time from planting till it can be used for food. Wheat must have a well-prepared soil, and be sown in the fall and watched and guarded for nine months before it is even ready to harvest; whereas a woman can take a "sang hoe" in April and with a quart of seed plant a patch around the cabin, and in six weeks she and the children can begin to eat "roastin' ears;" and when it gets too hard for that, she can begin to parch it. She needed to gather only what she used for the day; for it will stand all winter, well protected by its waterproof shucks. Not so with wheat. It must be all gathered at once when ripe, and thrashed, cleaned, and garnered. And even then it is hard to get bread out of it without a mill. But a small

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sack of parched corn with a bit of salt was an ample supply for a ten days' hunt or a dash with Jack Sevier after thieving Indians. Corn was king when I was a boy.

Mother and sisters, with Polly Shook to help them, worked the cotton and wool and flax into clothes and other needful articles for the family. I have helped mother put many a web into the loom that stood in the back part of the kitchen. Speaking of Polly Shook brings up some more boyhood scenes. Her name was Mary, but we always called her Polly when we did not call her Pop. It fell to me to mind off the calves when Polly went to milk—a duty I did not take to kindly, for sometimes when I took the young sucker by the ears to pull him away he would set his sharp little hoof down on my bare foot, and the harder I pulled the harder he bored his hoof into my foot. That made me mad, and I would bang him over the head with a stick. Then Polly would shame me “for striking the poor dumb brute that way.” I could not see that it was any of her special business, and I would say things to that effect to her. She was not tongue-tied, so she would say things back. One day I said to mother:

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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"I don't like to mind the calves off for Pop"—that is what I called her when I was mad—"for she quarrels with me." Now mother knew Polly, and she knew me, too. So she said she could tell how to manage so that Polly would not quarrel with me. That interested me very much, for I wanted to get the upper hand of Polly and make her hold her tongue. I said: "How, mamma?" With a touch of whisper in her voice, mother said: "The next time you go to milk just go by the water bucket and get your mouth full of cold water and keep it there till the milking is over, and Polly can't quarrel with you one bit." "Good," thought I. And I could hardly wait for milking time to come, so anxious was I to try my witchery on Polly. When the time came and she started with her milk pail, I ran to the water bucket and got my mouth chock full of water and started for the bars. I minded off the calves, watching Polly all the while to see if she was going to quarrel with me. As soon as she was done milking and the bars were put up, I spurted the water out and ran to mother. "Mamma, mamma! She never quarreled one bit." Mother smiled and said: "I told you so." And there is where

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the laugh comes in; but I, little goose, did not know it. However, there is something in it. I have seen many a quarrel that never would have occurred if one of the parties had had cold water in his mouth. Try it with little brother next time he is Sir Touch-me-not, and see if little sister can quarrel with him.

I think likely that if our young people should read this brief and imperfect outline of life as we lived it seventy years ago they would say: "Well, that was all work and no play, and I I don't see how any one could be happy with that sort of dry, tread-mill kind of life." Well, we did have to work, and had but little time or opportunity for what men call amusements nowadays. And yet, believe me, we were a happy family, both young and old. How was it? Well, maybe I can give some satisfactory explanation of it, its how and why, the next time we have a talk.

## VII

### OUR COUNTRY LIFE



REMEMBER that at the close of the last chapter of "Recollections" I half-way promised to explain for our young people how and why the simple life, as we lived it on the farm seventy years ago, was a happy life; but now I almost wish I had not done so, for it takes me off from my original purpose to write recollections. However, we can make short work of this and go on to our regular line.

Mr. Editor, begging your pardon, I thought I put enough in the last "turn" I sent to your mill to make two grists, but you poured it all into the hopper at once. Well, Mr. Editor, you are the miller and know what you want; but you do not know how much raking and winnowing it takes to get even a little grain out of the straw and chaff which have accumulated on the thrashing floor of an old man's recollections. Friends, I know how it comes about that he thinks I am wiser than I am: I was president of a college, with a hundred

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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and seventy-five young ladies in attendance, in his town when he yet had his milk teeth and wore his bib; and he got the childish impression that a man must be very wise to hold such a position, and these early impressions, as usual, seem to be lasting. But he is old enough now to know that not every man who is president of a college knows it all. Yes, he is old enough to know better than that, and to get married.

Well, we all had some profitable work to do, were never idle, and, therefore, never restlessly looking about for something with which to fill up the dull hours, thinking of what to do or where to go to find entertainment. Thus occupied, we were contented; and more, we were safe at home with father and mother. Take this for explanation No. 1.

Next, our tastes were simple and our needs few. As for the substantial comforts of life—food and raiment—we had them sufficient to meet our real needs and gratify our simple tastes, and so were satisfied. For our plain food, a few hours' work on the farm gave us an appetite that was better than a French cook. Thank God for the luxury of a healthy appetite—the appetite of a plowboy—that

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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wakes up with him in the morning to munch that big, yellow Hoss apple that he stuffed into his pocket yesterday when he was down in the orchard! No going to the breakfast table with a sort of loathing and half disgust of everything there, and the need of a little coffee to tease it to work; no indigestion—moping mother of the twins, Melancholy and Moroseness, firstborn in the family of Discontent, whose children are Petulance and Peevishness, prone to talk too much, and whose ungracious words hiss and sting like a mad bee, leaving a smart, if not a scar, for days to come.

Yes, thank God for the farmer boy's appetite and sound digestion, for they send his rich life-giving blood to put roses on his cheeks and iron in his muscles, and make his hoecake a luxury! I defy any caterer for any club to furnish at any cost a banquet that will be enjoyed as much as we children enjoyed mother's mush suppers. The truth is, mother could make the best mush mortal man or boy ever ate. She did not put in much meal at a time, added it slowly, stirring it all the while, so as not to have lumps in it nor have it raw in the center, then cooked it half an hour.

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"Hasty pudding" is a misnomer when applied to mush. Mother always said it took a full half hour to cook mush well; but it seemed longer than that to me as I watched the operation, my mouth watering all the while. Then each one with a bowl of milk and a big spoon—a pewter spoon, at that. Now Miss Angelina Cherubina Seraphina, please don't turn up your nose at that pewter spoon. I don't hone after pewter spoons myself these latter days, but that was mother's spoon, given to her as a part of her wedding portion from her father, and as good as the country then afforded. And I hold myself ready at the sword's point to resent any insult a pert miss may offer by snubbing it. There now; you understand that Miss A. C. S., once for all.

I should fail in much if I did not mention the glorious sleep of the farmer boy as one of the good things that belonged to his life. Yes, thank God for that sound and restful sleep of a fellow when he was a plowboy tired! It came uncourted about the time the whip-poor-will began his song in the copse at the back of the field—a luxury unknown to night revelers, and never followed by a bursting headache in the morning. The question,



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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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"Wherewithal shall we be clothed?" when we went to church or to visit our neighbors was a very simple one.

Neither the weather nor the hour of the day cut any figure in that grave problem; whether it was a bright or a dull day, noon or night, no matching of colors or puzzling as to the particular suit we should wear for that special occasion. I knew a week before the wedding came off just what suit I would wear—my mixed jeans, the same I had been wearing to all the big quiltings and singing schools for weeks' past—"Hobson's choice," The oneness in the case simplified the question very much, you see. I said "case," but they were not in a case—they hung on a peg with my flax shirt behind the door. No bother as to what or where. The fact is, friends, young and old, the question of physical comfort is in itself a simple one, and its demands are few and easily met. It is only when the clamorous desire for show and shine comes in, with its complex demands, that the everlasting worry of life begins. Pride and Vanity are the prolific parents of the peevish brood that is hounding good Comfort and sweet Contentment out of the land. And mark my words,

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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they are of little use in the formation of happiness of the noblest men and women.

As to amusements (better called pleasant occasions), we were not wholly without them. We knew the happy art of combining work and pleasure. Our log-rollings, house-raising, corn-shuckings, quiltings, singing schools, and an occasional dash with the dogs after a deer or fox were seasons of real enjoyment. The quiltings we were careful to bracket with the others wherever we could; thus, a house-raising and quilting, at such and such a home, day and date, or a log-rolling and quilting. The quilting brought out the girls, who were, and always have been, essential to a good social time, I reckon. "Well," you say, "if you could find pleasure in tugging your arms off rolling logs and wearing your finger tips sore at a corn-shucking, you must have been easily pleased." Even so, even so—happy faculty, secret of a contented life, easily pleased; sweet bud from the plant, heart's-ease, that flowers and fruits in the life of our best friends and companions. Grow it in your garden, child.

Well, talking about old house-raising and quilting days of my boyhood brings to mind many cherished recollections of the long ago—

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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pleasing scenes and youthful friends—brave, frank, generous young fellows, country born and bred, who would scorn to do an unmanly or ignoble thing; and, as they pass before my eyes, half filled with tears at this moment, I recall with unfeigned pleasure the fact that they were nearly every one religious. As for the girls (that is what we called them in those days), a whole bevy of them comes trooping by this minute. Not mincing in patent leather slippers and crepitating silks, but walking with an elastic step that tells of healthy muscles, arrayed in gowns woven and fashioned by their own industrious fingers, with now and then a burst of hearty laughter and a snatch of song—all merry as a flock of bobolinks in springtime. And there among them is my first old sweetheart, Phœbe Steed. See, her modesty has half hidden her in the group (as the daisy peeps from behind a leaf in the grass). Her willowy grace of movement was the rhythm of motion, her voice gentle and musical as the harp of the wind god, and a heart and life as pure as snow twice washed. Did I love her? Don't talk of love till you know something of the swellings of the heart in a sixteen-year-old country boy who

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has just begun to stand before the looking glass and roach his hair and paste it down with bear's grease. Did I marry her? No; we were never engaged. She married a better man, Wm. Horton, as she deserved to do, while I was away at college.

That singing school! We met on Saturdays and sang all day. Our book was the "Knoxville Harmony," by John B. Jackson, published at Knoxville. It was written in four syllables—fa, sol, la, mi. It was several years later when the seven syllables were introduced. Andrew Hutsell was our teacher. We sang four parts—bass, tenor, alto, and treble. My! my! How Will Cassady and Urb Rudd and Wash Peck, in his new suit of jeans, did roar on the bass! Boys and girls both sang on the tenor (air), Phœbe Steed and Myra Gaston led the treble, and the Misses Howard, two beautiful sisters, "carried" the alto. Usually we had two recesses, when a walk to the spring or a stroll in the grove gave us the coveted opportunity for social enjoyment. Then the noonday lunch, when the girls took all our baskets and spread a common meal on the homemade table cloth under the long-armed elm by the spring. The day done, we took the

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girls home—all on horseback. How we boys did curry and comb the mane and tails of our colts to have them ready to prance at the Saturday's singing! And with what marvelous art and ease those girls would spring from the top of that old chestnut stump into their saddles, and adjust their riding skirts for grace and safety in managing their horses, now grown restless from having been hitched up all day! And the horsemanlike skill with which Lizzie Noel did curb that mettlesome bay would shame the best jockey of to-day. Country lasses, happy lasses, good-by. I never expect to see your equals any more on earth. And now if the young people of to-day are happier and safer than we were on the farm seventy years ago—why, I am glad of it. That is all.

## VIII

### *LOVE FEASTS AND CLASS MEETINGS*



THESE chapters have run in a somewhat similar strain long enough. Let us vary the exercises, as the preacher would say, and hold an "experience meeting." I like experience meetings, especially when I feel religious, and I believe most people do under similar circumstances. As a Church we have used this kind of service with great spiritual profit. The love feast and the class meeting were of this character. The love feast is still known among us, often in a very modified form. But many of our young people, even members of the Church, who have never attended a class meeting, know nothing of them, how they are conducted, or why established. The love feast was more a testimony meeting, while the class meeting was designed as a special opportunity for helpful oversight, counsel, and exhortation by one called the leader. The old preachers used to set great store by these meetings. A few sentences giving an account of them,

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I think, may meet the approval of the reader, and at least preserve some knowledge of a religious exercise so much esteemed in the early history of the Church.

They were peculiar to us as a people, and subjected us to criticism, and sometimes to ridicule. They were primarily and almost exclusively designed for members of the Church. Strangers and outsiders were allowed to be present as a special privilege. The exercises consisted in an inquiry by the leader into the spiritual condition of the members, particularly the younger members of the class, and in giving such admonition and exhortation and encouragement as might be needed and helpful. And many young Christians had occasion to bless God for such help. The preacher in charge usually held class meeting immediately after services. I think I never knew Uncle George Ekin to fail. They called it "meeting the class" and the preacher was leader.

The class book was an interesting and important volume. It contained the names of the leaders and the members, usually in families. It was ruled in columns running perpendicularly and marked so as to show

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at a glance the following facts: The first column was to show whether the member was married or single, and was marked M or S; the second column was to indicate the spiritual condition of the member, whether a believer or seeker, and was marked B or S; the third column recorded the amount of quarterage paid by that member; the other columns were marked P or A or D, for present or absent or distant (from home). The roll was called at every meeting, unless the leader knew who were there and so marked the book. This book was inspected by the pastor at every round, if he desired it, and furnished him particular information concerning every member of that class. If a member were absent twice consecutively, the leader called to see if he were sick. The preacher would sometimes say to me, with kindly concern, after looking over our class book: "David, I see you were not at class the last time." Ah, those frequent reckonings with self and one another wrought careful living and much prayer in a boy, as I well remember. *I know no adequate substitute.* But I rejoice in all our young people's meetings, and pray God to make and keep them spiritual. But I proposed to have an



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experience meeting, and here I am writing about an experience meeting. Did you ever notice how much easier it is to talk about a thing than it is to do or be that thing—to talk about religion than it is to be religious, to talk about charity than to be charitable? There is a man staying here in my room and sleeping in my bed who has made observations and had experience on that very subject, and he sometimes gives me a dig in the ribs about it. Have you ever had such a fellow about your house?

And now, kind reader, let me explain a little about the next few chapters of these recollections. Two years ago my children asked me to write out for their use my early life—that part with which they were not acquainted. I copy in part from that sketch, which will explain why certain family affairs are made prominent. It was for the children to read at their leisure. Thus:

I was converted, as I verily believe, on a cold Sunday in the old log church in the town of Athens, Tenn., when I was in my twelfth year. Our place of worship was two miles in the country, at Cedar Springs; but occasionally when there were no services at our church, we

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went to town to preaching. It was a cold day; but my parents were going to church, and father asked me if I did not want to go. So I got my colt, and was looking about for a saddle when my father said: "Son, I don't think I would get a saddle; just spread your blanket on the colt, and he will keep you warmer than if you had a saddle." So I did, and we went to church. Rev. Frank Fanning was the preacher. There were not twenty persons present, perhaps—just a few old people hovering around the stove. I sat with my hands between my knees to keep them warm, and listened to the preacher. He preached about Jesus, but what he said I do not know. But there came into my childish heart a feeling unknown before—a strange sense of the nearness and love of Jesus, of whom mother had so often spoken to me. I felt that I loved him. A simple, childlike tenderness filled my heart and I felt that he loved me. It was a most delightful sensation. I think I wept for very joy, but said nothing. It was all so new and strange and sweet that I knew nothing to say. I looked over to the seat where father and mother were seated, and such a flood of love for them swept through

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me that I could hardly repress the desire to run and hug them. I did actually love everybody and everything. And that sweet feeling stayed with me after the benediction, and went home with me and made the colt ride better. His coltish ways, worming in and out of the road, did not fret me. It stayed with me all about the house and barn, singing in my heart when alone in the woods; and I wanted to pray, and did not want my dog to catch that little rabbit and kill it. Do you ask, "What was it?" I never once thought what it was. I was happy and peaceful, and everybody was good, and that was enough. Sometimes I would stay around mother and wish she would tell me to do something, that I might have the pleasure of showing her how quickly and well I could do it. It did not occur to me that I had religion. Indeed, I hardly thought a boy could get religion except at Cedar Springs Camp Meeting. But that sweet, love-everybody feeling staid with me till' camp meeting. I was glad when that came. At the first call I went to the mourners' bench, and down in the straw father and mother and brother and sister came, and we prayed together, and I began to laugh and hug them. It

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was the same old feeling of love and tenderness which I felt on the cold Sunday six months before. I said: "I've got religion. Hallelujah!" It was true, and I have never had any better, and all I want now is more of it. So I sometimes tell my friends that I was converted six months before I got religion. Maybe somebody will look religiously wise and shake his theological head at this. But if you will be careful to use these terms in the sense here employed, I do not believe they will hurt your good creed, and perhaps maybe help somebody who does not know what religion is.

Our good Dr. Tillett, who wrote that wise and helpful book, "Personal Salvation," can make this clear to the young theologues if he has a mind to; and when he has done so, I will be for once in my life like General Jackson. When Calhoun was firing the heart of South Carolina with the spirit of nullification, the General sent word, "Tell Calhoun that if he don't behave himself I'll hang him as high as Haman," but did not tell him why. Sometime afterwards, when Daniel Webster, in an argument, showed that logical nullification could not exist under the Constitution, Jackson said:

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“There, I knew I was right all the time.” It is said that he put in some words to give emphasis to his utterance. Here is the law on this subject: “He that loveth is born of God.” Now let us sing with Mrs. Prentiss No. 367. And as the disciplinary “one hour” for love feast is now out, we will for the next chapter have the experience meeting continued.

## IX

### *EARLY SCHOOL DAYS*



MY place was on the farm till I was about eight years old, with father and mother, happy brothers and sisters; often in the field with playful colts, skipping lambs, singing birds, and my ever-present dog—a happy boy. I went to school two or three months during the winter till I was fifteen. These were subscription schools, made up and supported by the neighbors. We had no public schools then. The first school I attended was at Rocky Mountain, on the back of my father's farm. The little house was made of logs with the bark on, a weight-pole roof (I have not time to explain that term to the ignorance of to-day) and puncheon floor. The only window was made by cutting out a log ten or twelve feet long. Under this opening was a slab, resting on pegs, which made a sort of shelf upon which the larger boys and girls wrote. The ink was made of ink balls—

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a sort of vegetable excrescence, sometimes formed on the twigs or leaves of oak trees, containing a substance which turned black on exposure to the air—or of polk-berry juice or elder berries. This was kept in a small vial with a string around the neck to hang it up by when not held in the hand for use. The benches were slabs with peg legs. Here I learned to spell. When I learned my A B C's I do not know. After I was fifteen, I had two years at Forest Hill Academy, under Charles Patrick Samuel, a tall, scholarly Kentuckian—"Old Pat," of blessed memory. After this I went to Emory and Henry College.

I mention a sad providence which led to my going when I did. My brother, Timothy, who was fifteen years my senior and had been a member of the Holston Conference thirteen or fourteen years, was stricken with paralysis while on his way to the Annual Conference, which met that year at Wytheville, Va. He was at Abingdon when stricken. The report of this affliction saddened all hearts at home. In a very few days father decided to send me to Virginia. First, to nurse my brother if he needed me; and if not, then I was to sell my horse and go on to college, ten miles

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farther east. How this conclusion stirred the household, and especially the boyish heart of the writer and that of his mother, will never be forgotten. I was soon fitted out for the trip, and the morning for my departure had come. Family prayers that morning were perhaps a little longer and tenderer than usual, and breakfast was almost in silence. Mother cried, and I said: "Don't cry, mother. I will soon be back." She replied: "No my son, not back with us at home. When you have finished your college course you will go to your life work, and only be a visitor at home hereafter." Two older brothers had gone off to college, and mother knew. "A visitor only hereafter." I could not realize it, and yet so it was. My outfit was not elaborate. A pair of saddlebags contained all, save a suit of mixed jeans, which had been taken from the back of our sheep and fitted to mine. A small muskrat-colored Indian pony, fourteen hands high and badly sway-backed, had to carry me and all I had two hundred miles. I left home, mother standing nearest the gate to say good-bye last, and brother going two miles on the way to see me get a good start. We rode side by side those two miles, almost in silence. A



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word or two about my pony and a passing remark about the weather and a last injunction about my dogs. He ventured to say: "We will miss you at home and at the coming Christmas." And then there came a choking sensation, and maybe a tear, but no audible answer. Finally he said: "Well, I must go back. Take care of yourself. Write often, for we will all want to know about you and brother Timothy. Good-by." And his horse's head was turned toward home—the dear old home; how dear, I never knew before. My pony and I faced for the first time the great unknown outside world. Day and hour never to be forgotten. Brother—dear fellow—he was as tender as a woman, lived a long bachelor life, fought through the Civil War with Lee, and now sleeps the Christian's hopeful sleep near Wolf City, in Texas.

By a previous agreement, Ben Hale, a boy about my age living in the upper end of the county, was to join me a few miles farther on. In the meantime thoughts crowded each other in rapid succession—now back home with loved ones a moment, and then back to myself and surroundings. Of what was in my saddlebags I knew but little. Father and

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mother and sister had furnished and packed them, and whatever belonged to me I knew was there, be it little or much. But here is Ben waiting by the roadside, and I am glad to see him—a hearty country boy on a good horse, going to visit his army of kinsfolk—the Hales and Canutts and Wards, etc., in Grayson County, Va. A jolly fellow on a visit to spend Christmas with his kindred. And now I shall have the pleasure of leaving off in my narrative the oft-recurring “I,” and say “we” without affectation of being an editor. We (Ben and I) moved on, and about noon passed in sight of Daniel Heiskell’s home, the road running through the woods, where Sweetwater now stands. We pressed on, making good use of the short December day, and ate our lunch as we rode along. When I opened mine and found a ham sandwich and some buttered biscuits with jam between, a hard-boiled egg, and an apple, it all looked so much like mother and sister that, had it been practicable, I think I would have preferred to keep it as a souvenir, rather than eat it.

Soon we passed the old town of Philadelphia, and came to Blair’s Ferry, on the Tennessee River, where Loudon has since been built.

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We crossed the river and urged our tired horses four miles more to Mr. John Browder's, an old friend of my father, two miles west of what is now Lenoir City. Here we spent the night—our first night from home. But we slept like tired boys, and were up early and ready for our second day. This day we passed by the home of William Lenoir, where Lenoir City now stands, and the home of Rev. John Winton, great-grandfather of Dr. G. B. Winton, editor of the *Christian Advocate*. We finally reached Knoxville, where I had a brother-in-law (Dr. A. Woodward), and sister. Sister made us feel at home. The next day, in the evening, we rode out ten miles on the Rutledge Road, and spent the night with Mr. R. L. Blair, the uncle of a young lady whose acquaintance I made seven years later and who will come into these reminiscences after a while if they are not cut short in some way. The next day we passed the town of Rutledge and the celebrated Bean's Station, often mentioned in the journal of Bishop Asbury. Here the Kentucky escorts used to come over the mountains to meet him and conduct and guard him over the Clinch Mountain, through Cumberland Gap, to the "dark and bloody

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ground" of Kentucky. Two miles east we came to what is now the very noted Tate Springs, but we saw only the rounded hills there. By night we reached the village of Mooresburg, and spent the night at the Red Bridge, a little farther on.

The fifth day we passed the good town of Rogersville, and on up the beautiful valley to Mr. Phipps'. This was a home of wealth, and gave us a royal entertainment; and here we got a glimpse of the very beautiful daughter of the household, who seemed a bit interested in a couple of tired boys who had stopped for a night's rest. I had the opportunity in after years to thank her for it, which I did with all the grace I could muster. It was apparent from some talk next day that Ben had an eye for a beautiful girl, elegantly dressed. Indeed, the Hales of Virginia are built that way, as I found out later. This day brought us to the boat yard, where two branches of the Holston River come together, now Kingsport—so named perhaps because William King, who owned the salt works in Virginia, boated his salt down the north fork of the Holston River to that point. It was now growing colder, and we pressed on to Mr. David Shaver's—

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twenty-seven miles yet to Abingdon. Here we spent the night.

Next morning the snow was two or three inches deep, and increased in depth until we reached Abingdon, where it was eight or ten inches deep. This I had good reason to remember: for if my pony got out of the beaten way, I had to hold up my feet to keep them from dragging in the snow. As we entered the town I asked the first man we met for information as to my brother. He told me he was at John Campbell's on the next street. Ben and I said good-bye, and I turned to find brother. In a few minutes I was in his room, to his great surprise, and to my delight found him much improved. I had a brother-in-law (H. Cardwell), and sister living in the town. Soon they called; and as brother had a nurse and did not need me, I went home with them, a tired, but happy boy.

It was Christmas Eve, and my brother, Nathan Asbury, who was a student in the college, only ten miles away, came to spend the holidays with us. After consultation, it was decided that I was not needed with Timothy and that I should enter the spring term of college, as father had directed. So I sold my

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pony to Major Davis, who kept the boarding house, for a credit of forty-five dollars on my bill, took a room with my brother, entered the freshman class half advanced, joined the Calliopean Society, and settled down to work. Here I remained till June, 1850, when I graduated with the degree of A.B.

## X

### *EARLY DAYS AT EMORY*



NOW that I am back again to my college days, a thousand memories come trooping up, and I hesitate to attempt to make a selection where each is so dear. It was in the early years of old Emory and Henry history. There were only three houses there then: the old college building on the hill, the brick house at the west end of the campus (both still standing), and the farm house in which Mr. Crawford lived when the Church bought the property (long since burned). The faculty consisted of Charles Collins, D.D., President and Professor of Mental and Moral Science; E. E. Wiley, D. D., Professor of Latin and Greek; Rev. Edmond Longley, A.M., Professor of Mathematics and Modern Languages; and Rev. J. A. Davis, tutor. Dr. Collins lived in the house on the west end of the campus. Dr. Wiley lived in two or three lower rooms in the west end of the college. Professor Longley lived over on the stage road, a mile away.

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Tutor Davis, unmarried, took his meals at the common boarding house (the Crawford home), of which his father, Major Joseph Davis, was proprietor. Professor Longley ("Old Brit") was postmaster and delivered our letters to our rooms. Our literary halls were in the garrets—the Calliopean in the west end and the Hermesian in the east. We paid six dollars per month for rooms, board, and fuel, furnished (?) our own rooms, made up (?) our beds, cut the wood and made our fires, and carried water from the spring. Roll call and prayers came morning and evening—morning prayers at 5:30 (which was before daylight in the winter) and no fire in the chapel. I jumped out of bed many times, hurriedly dressed (?), ran into the chapel to answer "Present" and shiver while the Professor read—by the light of a tallow candle which he brought in with him—a few lines from the morning lesson and repeated the Lord's Prayer, the snow a foot deep and the north wind howling through the hills and whistling at the keyhole. Dr. Collins held evening prayer, and Drs. Wiley and Longley morning prayers. From morning prayers we went immediately to recitation. There were



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two recitations before breakfast, at six and six-thirty, of thirty minutes each. That is the way Emory and Henry professors and pupils began the day sixty years ago, and we kept it up at about that rate till nine at night. Schoolmen and students of to-day would perhaps rebel against such a schedule of work—that it would grind the life out of teachers and pupils. Well, it did grind, but it ground out men all the same.

Let me think a moment and name a few of my school fellows who were fitted for noble service among men and have attained to great honor and usefulness in their generation: Dr. James S. Kennedy, of the Holston Conference, a prince in Israel, every inch a Christian gentleman and scholar, wise in counsel and safe in action, always loyal to God and truth; Dr. W. M. Leftwich ("Little Leftwich"), who for many years held posts of honor among his brethren in the Tennessee Conference and elsewhere; Gen. J. E. B. Stuart, glorious "Jeb," that flower of cavaliers to whose memory his fellow citizens are to-day building a monument in the capital of his native state; William E. Peters, LL.D., a gallant colonel in the Confederate army, and

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afterwards Professor of Latin in the great University of Virginia till his death; Hon. H. D. Clayton, general in the army of the Confederacy, and afterwards Governor of Alabama and head of the Alabama University; James L. Jones, LL.D., President of Columbia College, S. C.; Hon. J. J. Yeates, Congressman from North Carolina; Judge Monroe, Supreme Judge of the State of South Carolina; and others.

Among the living of my school fellows who have wrought well and are still bringing forth fruit in old age, I mention two who for fifty and more years have been acknowledged leaders in our Holston Conference—one a little eccentric, the other a bit positive; both great and good men, worthily wearing the well-earned honors which the ministry and laity of the church and their fellow-citizens at large are gladly awarding them. Of these dear men I have more to say later, but for the present will leave the reader to guess at their names. J. Preston White, my classmate, a judge of the Supreme Court of the State of Texas, and Hon. John Goode, of Virginia, statesman, soldier, and author—a man who has served his State and nation in public office for more

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than half a century with such ability as has won for him continually increasing respect and admiration—were also in this list. Others no doubt, belong to the list whose names do not occur to me at this moment. Let it be remembered that this list is taken from the students who were in Emory and Henry College from 1847 to 1850, and does not include the many who were there in other years.

The college plant, all told, was not worth fifty thousand dollars, perhaps, at that time. The above facts furnish food for thought in these days when the hearts of our people are turned to the subject of education. We are told that it takes millions of dollars for the financial basis of a first-class college. That is true when applied to the university, where specialists are educated and a large number of schools must be conducted. But, thank God! it is not true when applied to the schools most needed for the education of the people. My observation is that largely endowed schools with splendid buildings and professors on fat salaries, are not turning out a proportionately large number of men who are blessing their generation. Such schools usually grow to be costly schools very soon, where only the rich

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can pay the bills, and so they fail to get the best material out of which to make men. The boys, whom necessity has taught to work and economize, to be content with few luxuries and a little self-indulgence, with sound minds in healthy bodies, are the boys who make men. Emory and Henry, with an inferior outfit in buildings, a small faculty of industrious, Christian scholars who gave their personal attention to the minds, manners, and morals of the hundred and thirty or forty country boys present, gave to the world such men as are mentioned above, at a cost to pupil of about one hundred dollars per year, or a little more.

Now that we have the subject before us, let us mention another college here in our hills—Hiwassee. Here Dr. John H. Brunner, now the senior college man among us, with a few coworkers, for the forty years last past has educated the poor boys of the country. As an outfit they had a mere crow's nest, but they hatched out eagles. They had a gimlet, but they bored auger holes with it. They had the material out of which to make men—boys who had not been spoiled by indulgence in their childhood. Bent twigs produce crooked trees.

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Now, Mr. Editor, if you and the reader will pardon me for this digression, I will hereafter write recollections and let others make inferences and comments. But I wanted to go on record as favoring a multiplication of such schools as Emory and Henry and Hiwassee were fifty years ago. I am not to be counted as opposing well-endowed universities, and a few first-class colleges as they are now defined, but I want to see the country sowed down in such schools as are mentioned above. Amen.

My school days ended, I began to look to my life work. Thank God, I did not have the trouble of determining what that work should be. That had been settled for me and by me while I was yet a little boy. When I was converted in my twelfth year, if indeed not before, I felt that I must and would be a preacher some day. I read my Bible, went to prayer meeting and to Sunday-school, and prayed in the haymow when I went to feed my colt, and finally went to college with that fact ever present. I am not conscious of ever having been tempted to give it up, thank God! While in college we enjoyed several gracious revivals, in which I gladly took part. One I will tell you of. It was brought about in this

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way: Four of we boys seemed to be moved simultaneously to go to the woods and pray for a larger measure of faith and deeper consecration of life. After a little talk together, we agreed to slip off to the forest next evening when school closed—Richard Childers, James S. Kennedy, James Bailey, and I. We walked down by Dr. Collin's and out toward the old stage road. It was all woods then from the college southeast for a mile. Soon we left the road and struck into a hollow where we thought no one would see or hear us. There we found the fallen trunk of a forked tree, and sat down on its limbs, facing each other two and two. Here we sang several songs and prayed—all prayed with snatches of songs between prayers—sang softly, fearing some one might hear us. The Father of the woods did hear us and gave delightful evidence of his presence as we waited for Him in that great forest temple. We got back to college just at supper time. Some of our special friends looked at us with a sort of inquiring gaze, as much as to say, "Where have you been?" We told a few of the more religious boys. So it got noised abroad. Next evening, when we started, there came a dozen and

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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more following after us. We were glad and felt less afraid of being heard, so we did not go more than half as far till we found a good place to pray. The other boys came up close about us and sat at the roots of the trees and joined in the singing and prayers. We sang louder that evening. The supper horn called us before we got back. The next evening we began to sing by the time we struck the woods, and scores of boys were with us. After a few songs and prayers, it was evident that a great solemnity was resting on many hearts. Kennedy, I think it was, made a short talk and invited any who desired to be saved and wished the counsel and prayers of their fellow-students to come and kneel down about a big stump in our midst. Ten or a dozen came, weeping, and fell down on the leaves. Now all hands had work, instructing, encouraging, and praying. Two or three were converted, and we made the woods ring with our praises.

We went to supper two and two with locked arms. As we passed by the gate at Dr. Collin's, I ran in and reported, and asked him if we might not have a service in Dr. Wiley's recitation room that night (that was the largest room

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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except the chapel). He was delighted and said that he would come and worship with us. The announcement was made at the supper table. We arranged the room and carried our tallow candles to light it. Soon we were singing at the top of our voices. The Doctor joined us—not in the songs, for he could not sing a bit, but with much emotion and great earnestness he preached and called for penitents. What an hour that was! As the boys came he stood, his handsome face all aglow, while he invited the “young gentlemen” (that is what he always called us) to come to Jesus. The appointment was made for the next night for the chapel. The meeting had right of way now, and for many nights we rallied, and many boys were converted, who made leaders in Israel’s host for many years to come. Some of the neighbors came in, and occasionally a motherly hand was laid on a boy’s head whose mother was far away. It made me think and sigh for home. Thank God for Christian colleges!



## XI

### *WHEN AND WHERE LICENSED*



WHEN my college work was done, I knew what came next. I had not asked for a license to preach. Starting home I stopped at Abingdon to visit my sister, Hazy—Mrs. J. H. Cardwell. W. G. E. Cunnyingham was preacher in charge and T. K. Catlett presiding elder. It was quarterly meeting. Cunnyingham knew I expected to be a preacher, so he said to me: "You have no license, and you may not find a Quarterly Conference when you get home. Deposit your Church letter with us, and I will ask the Quarterly Conference to give you a license to preach and recommend you to the Annual Conference." It was done—June, 1850. I went home a young Methodist preacher, but it was all new. I tried my first service and sermon at old Cedar Springs, where my father and mother worshipped. The singing, reading, and praying went along well enough, and the first few sentences of the talk,

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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but the rest was made up of blundering and crying. I was ashamed.

Conference is coming, and I must get ready. Now I must go back to a little talk my father and I had before he sent me to college. We were on the way to town (Athens), I going to mill, he to get a Dutch mowing blade—the clover was about ready to cut. (This was before my brother was stricken with paralysis.) He said: “Your brother, Timothy, wants me to send you to college, and I am willing to do so if you want to go. But,” he added, “if you go to college, I will pay your bills, and that will be all I can do for you. Your brothers and sisters will have to have what will be left.” I told him I understood him and would go to college with that understanding. So when brother was taken sick at Abingdon, Va., ten miles only from college, my parents fitted me up to go first to wait on him, as said above, and then go on to school.

Now my college days were over and my bills paid, and both my father and I remembered the understanding we had before I started for college, though neither of us had mentioned it since. He called it up one day, and said: “As you have decided to be a preacher, I must

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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fit you out with a horse, etc.” Then he added: “Go to the barn and take your choice of all the horses there.” This I did, selecting a fine chestnut-sorrel mare, Fannie, four years old. He furnished me a good saddle, bridle, blanket, and saddlebags, and mother added a fine solid blue blanket, thick as felt. In the middle of it she made a slit large enough for my head to go through, and bound the slit with ribbon. This was to go on my saddle in dry and warm weather and over my shoulders in wet and cold weather—my head through the hole in the middle. I had no overcoat. This blanket I kept and took into the army with me in 1861. While we were encamped at Mill Springs, in Kentucky, I left it outside the door one evening and some soldier appropriated it. The snow was three or four inches deep, and I did not blame him much, though I sorely missed my old stand-by—mother’s good blanket. I never saw a better.

So equipped, I was ready to start off for Conference, save that I did not have a cent of money. The day before I was to start, my father asked: “Have you any money to meet expenses?” He knew that I had none. He was a born quizz, and, smiling, he handed me

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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twelve dollars. He supposed that I would travel as preachers traveled in those days—without being charged, and that twelve dollars would last a good while for “pin money.” And so it would; but I traveled alone and neither looked nor felt like a preacher. I asked for my bill each morning, and paid it—usually one dollar for myself and horse. Conference met that year (1850) in Abingdon, and it required six days to make the trip. That took six of my dollars and left me six. At the missionary collection during Conference James Atkins, Sr. (father of Dr. James Atkins, now bishop), said: “I will be one of twenty to give five dollars.” There were nineteen responses, and then it “hung fire.” Finally I said, “I’ll take the other five,” and handed him the money. That left me with one dollar.

Well, I was admitted into the Conference on trial, with nine others—among them R. N. Price, who alone survives to this day. He and I were Emory students together, and side by side we have stood for these fifty-five years members of the Holtson Conference, M. E. Church, South. May my God keep his hand on this dear man and bring him and his safely

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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home from the field when the sun goes down!

Was I concerned about my appointment? No. I knew nothing of the fields of work and never once thought where I might be sent. "Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise." Bishop Capers read me out to Burnsville, N. C. (Holston then included Western North Carolina.) William Hicks was presiding elder; and, to my delight, James A. Reagan and R. N. Price were appointed to the adjoining work—Ream's Creek Circuit—and George Alexander to Asheville Station. We four (Alexander, Reagan, Price, and I) left Abingdon Wednesday, took dinner at Worley's, one mile east of Bristol, and then went to Blountville and spent the night with J. J. James. I tried to preach that night. Next day we went to Jonesboro. Reagan and Price stopped with Dr. Cossen; and Alexander and I with J. H. Dosser. That night Alexander told me that he and Miss Lizzie Smith (daughter of Pleasant Smith, near Emory and Henry College) were going to be married after a few months and he wanted me to be his "best man." Of course, I agreed to do so. Miss Smith was his second wife. Next day we took dinner at Brother Wilhoit's, and

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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went on to Garrett's, near Warm Springs, N. C., for the night. This day we passed the celebrated Paint Rock, on the French Broad River, and our road and the river ran side by side. Leaving Garrett's Saturday morning, we went up this river road, one of the most picturesque and interesting mountain roads I ever saw—every foot of it bringing into view a beautiful picture as we followed the tortuous, headlong little stream hunting its way out of the mountains into the great Tennessee Valley.

Saturday night we got to the celebrated stand, Alexander's, ten miles this side of Asheville. Here Brother Alexander left us and went on to town to meet his first appointment. Reagan and Price were now in their own work. And here we found a charming Christian family—the Alexanders—mostly daughters, who were educated at the celebrated Moravian School at Salem, N. C. Rev. J. S. Burnett, of Holston, married one of them, and he and his wife were here at her father's. Judge John Baxter married two of them—a first and second wife. During the lifetime of the second wife he came from North Carolina to Knoxville, Tenn. I was on the Knoxville

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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Station at that time, and she was a member of my Church. An acquaintance begun ten years before was gladly renewed on my part, and the renewal only increased my admiration for her superior Christian character. The Judge, a man of great intellect and strength of character, was a doubter as to the reality of the Christian religion—an honest doubter, I think. His wife took sick and was sick unto death. Wife and I were with her much of the time, and when the end came it was such a deathbed scene as shook the Judge, both mind and body. She talked as quietly of dying and going home as if she were going to make a visit to her father's house in the hills of old Buncombe, the home of her childhood. The Judge would stand at her head and listen as one amazed, and then walk the floor—wrestling not only with a great sorrow, but struggling with a fact for which he could not account without admitting the deepest truths of religion. We sang softly "Jesus, Lover of My Soul." She joined us in the song and smiled while she sang. I asked: "Are you afraid to die?" She answered with a clear, calm voice: "No sir; I am not afraid of anything." Finally she fell on sleep. A more

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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triumphant death I never witnessed. The Judge came and looked for a moment on her sweet, quiet face, and then walked the room again. We buried her next day, and the day following I met the Judge at his home. He took me by the hand, and with the lines of his face drawn tight as cords, he said: "There is something in the triumphant death of my wife inexplicable on any other ground than that religion is true." "Why," he added, "she was always timid as a frightened bird; but when the grim monster came, she knew no fear." Thank God for consistent Christian living and triumphant Christian dying!



## XII

### *A MEMORABLE DAY*



UNDAY morning we all left the river and went over to Ream's Creek (now Weaverville). Here was the district parsonage, and Brother Hicks was at home, as he had come through the near way. Brother Reagan preached, and I concluded for him. Bishop Janes once held our Conference at this place. This was the home of the large and influential family of Weavers; hence the name, Weaverville. The Western North Carolina Conference now has a school there, Weaverville College. I was now some twenty-five or thirty miles southeast of my work, having gone around and passed it. I might have reached it directly from Jonesboro in half the distance by going a bridle pathway through the mountains. Monday morning I told the brethren good-bye and started alone for Burnsville, and this Monday was one of the most memorable days of my life. This is true to this day—fifty-five years

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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later. Up to this point, since leaving Conference, I had most congenial companions, and two of them knew the road and the people on the way. So I was easy as to the where and when and how of our traveling. But now I was to go alone. A strange feeling crept upon me as I began to fully take in the situation. But I was in the path of duty, as I honestly believed. The validity of my call to the ministry was never questioned, and it had never occurred to me that I could answer that call in any way but by being a traveling preacher. I found solid comfort here, and so I pulled up Fannie's bridle a little and said: "All right, gal, move on; this is the way for us." I am sorry for the Methodist preacher who never talked to his horse, or shared his apple or biscuit with him at lunch time.

I was late starting that morning; somehow did not want to say good-bye, and so had not gone more than ten miles before I had an inward admonition that it was nearing dinner time; and with that I began to consider my chances for something to eat for myself and Fannie. Then for the first time I thought of my money; but without feeling in my pocket

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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for it, I began to count back where I had spent a fourpence here and another there. It was in the days of slavery, and I made it a rule to give something to the boy who cared for my horse and blacked my boots. We all wore boots in those days. Then we had to pay at two or three tollgates along the river. When I counted it up as well as I could, I concluded that I had spent seventy-five cents of the dollar I had left at Conference, and so thought there was still twenty-five cents in my pocket. But when the pocket was searched, I found only an old Spanish piece, worn perfectly smooth and very thin, worth twenty cents. This was my stock in trade among strangers, hungry, and two hundred miles from mother. Maybe a cloud passed over the sun just then, for things looked a little blue, I thought. However, Fannie and I were headed for the Burnsville Circuit, and, looking ahead, I saw a good-looking white house, apparently right in the road. On approaching it I found the road turned square to the right immediately in front of the house. I made the turn, and had gone a few yards past the gate when I heard a lady's voice calling: "Mr. Sullins." I heard only that, but that was enough. I stopped,

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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turned back, and made my best bow to a lady standing in the door. How this came about, I could not guess. In a moment she said: "Stop and take dinner with us." Here was a delightful surprise. No tired plowboy ever heard the dinner horn in the long days in June with more pleasure than that invitation gave me. She called a servant from the wood yard and said: "Take care of the gentleman's horse." As I approached she extended her hand, and explained thus: "I was at Ream's Creek yesterday. You concluded the services, and I learned your name and that you go to the Burnsville Circuit this year. We are Methodists, and are always glad to have the preachers stop with us. My name is Blackstock." This made all plain. I had an excellent dinner, and made the acquaintance of a family whose friendship I appreciated. When I was ready to leave, the family came together for prayers. That was the custom in those days. My friend, Miss Blackstock, said as I was starting: "There is no house on the road for many miles through the mountain at which you can get lodging. You will have to turn off the road some ten miles from here and stay with Mr. Carter." She then said

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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casually: "He's a Baptist, and may charge you for staying all night." That last remark impressed me seriously, and the reader can tell why.

But Fannie and I were headed for the Burnsville Circuit, and this was the road. So after many thanks and "good-bye," I started, grateful for such good providence as gave me my dinner. The road ran along the foothills of the big mountains that towered high above me. The sand was deep, with loose rocks among it. Soon I began to think thoughts. Fannie clipped off the miles well. The shadows of the tall pines began to stretch far along the road. I must be near the bridge way that turns off to Carter's. And what will you do if when you ask for your bill in the morning the old gentleman should say, "One dollar?" Ah, there was the trouble. I do not think I was foolishly sensitive, but the thought of having to tell my Baptist host that I was a Methodist preacher and had but twenty cents in the world made the pine shadows look longer still. True, I could tell him, "My circuit comes near you, and I will surely pay you the other eighty cents soon," and maybe he would believe me. Still I did not feel good

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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over it. In the mountains, among strangers, with only twenty cents in my pocket, night coming on, and mother two hundred miles away! Well, if I cried a little, there was no one to see me. Just then I looked up, and coming around a turn in the road I saw a large, well-dressed man on a fine pacing bay horse, some two hundred yards before me. This broke the train of thought. As the gentleman approached I lifted my eyes and bowed, and, to my surprise, he reined his horse up and stopped suddenly. Then turning, he said: "Excuse me, sir, but are you not the preacher going to Burnsville Circuit?" I answered: "I am." "Well," he said, "I am glad to see you, Brother Sullins. My name is McElroy. You will see on the plan of your work that I am the secretary of the board of stewards." Without giving me time to gather my thoughts together and tell him how glad I was to see him, he talked right on, saying: "I am glad to see you. I live in Burnsville; am on my way to Charleston, S. C., to lay in my winter stock of goods. Go right to my house and feel at home. I must hurry on, for I have to go to Blackstock's to stay all night." And he moved forward a step, perhaps, when suddenly

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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he turned back and said: "Wait. Your first quarterly meeting will be held on Jack's Creek before I get back. Here, take this five dollar bill and report it for me to the Quarterly Conference." Then, starting again, he looked back and said: "A half mile up there you will find a path to the right, which leads out to old Mr. Carter's, where you can spend the night." There now! Surely a cloud had gone off the sun, it was so light on the hills. It was day-break everywhere, all the birds were singing at once.

Two minutes later you might have heard a young preacher whistling along up the road, keeping time as he patted Fannie's neck, or now and then chuckling a little to himself as he anticipated saying to Mr. Carter next morning, if he charged for the night's lodging: "I will have to trouble you to break this five, as I have not enough loose change by me to pay my bill."

But here is the little byway, and soon I am at Carter's, Fannie gone to the barn, and I seated on the porch with a fine basket of apples by my side. The sun is just going down, and a bracing breeze comes down from the Big Black Mountain, promising frost by

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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morning. So closed one of the most memorable days of my life. Its lessons on faith in Him who said to me in my childhood, "Go," have lingered with me ever since. Awful first day! Blessed first day! Never to be forgotten.



### XIII

#### *INTERESTING INCIDENTS*



EATED on the porch of Mr. Carter, as the eventful first day of my ministry closed, I had a favorable opportunity for a little quiet. The evening breezes from the Big Black came crisp and cold out of the deep, dark forests of balsam, which gave color and name to this great monarch of the Alleghanies; and as they fanned my brow, I caught the rich aromatic odors they had gathered in their leafy dells, where they had spent the day, and was refreshed. The coming of the lowing cows from the field and the milkmaid, with pail in hand, going out to the pen where the restless calves were bleating, recalled Polly Shook and the days of childhood. Such had been the pleasing evidence of my Heavenly Father's timely care in the experiences of the day that I was really happy. I had learned as never before how to "commit my way unto the Lord and to trust also in Him." My meditations were soon interrupted. A gentleman rode up to the

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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gate, hitched his horse, and came directly to the house. A son of Mr. Carter, I guessed. But I was wrong, for as soon as he came on the porch he looked straight at me for a moment, then, bowing, said: "Aren't you the preacher going to the Burnsville Circuit?" I had often wondered how those "Tar Heels" could tell a preacher at a glance. I answered: "Yes." "Well," said he, "I thought so." Then he added: "My name is Young. I live with Mr. McElroy, in Burnsville. I am a Methodist and glad to see you." He was a young man about my age, and I was delighted to meet him. We occupied the same room that night, and I noticed that he bowed by his bed in prayer before he lay down. He was a young man of fine business sense, good character, and fair culture. He told me that his business there at that time was to buy cattle for the Southern market. The neighbors thereabouts were to bring their marketable cattle to that place in the morning. The announcement had been spread abroad. So when morning came, bringing a white frost, Mr. Young was up early to look after business, and very soon heard the big cow bells coming in on the different mountain roads and trails, ten,

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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fifteen, or twenty in a squad, the leader of each herd usually wearing a large bell and announcing his approach by such bellowings as almost shook the hills. I was up right away, determined to see what was going on and to show the neighbors that I was not a "sleepy-head," but a wide-awake young preacher, ready for anything honorable, work or fun.

Mr. Young bought some forty or fifty out of the different herds, and among them three leaders, monster fellows, whose furious bellowings were enough to satisfy any Spaniard at a bullfight. The question of who is master must be settled before they are started on the road; otherwise, they will give trouble. So it was agreed to turn them two at a time into the little meadow nearby. First, the largest and smallest were turned in, and, after some pawing and bellowing, they locked horns—not figuratively. But the smaller one soon found that he was overmatched, and gave it up. Next the second in size was turned in. He was but a little less than the largest, and, after much bellowing and swelling and maneuvering for positions, they set to with force enough, it would seem, to burst their skulls.

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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And now the frost flew and the meadow sod was torn up as by a plow. Round and round they turned, trying for vantage ground, until finally the larger one threw his horn under the jaw or neck of his antagonist, and the fight was over; and nobody hurt, no blood spilled.

Thus began my first day on the Burnsville Circuit. Breakfast over, soon the cattle were on their way to Burnsville. I must not forget to tell you that Mr. Carter did not charge me for my night's lodging, but gave me a hearty invitation to return again. I joined Mr. Young and made some reputation as a cattle driver, and lost nothing by it.

We got to Burnsville that evening. My appointments began there the next Sunday. I spent the rest of the week there, visiting the families of my people and getting acquainted with the town. I found that there were twenty-two preaching places on the circuit, all to be filled every four weeks, with an average travel of about ten miles per day. I had no books but my Bible, hymn book, Discipline, and Watson's Dictionary. There were but few books in the homes I visited. Occasionally I would borrow a good book from a good brother and read it on horseback and

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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return it on my next round. I was strong and in fine health; had been brought up on a farm, and knew how to mix with people. I could sing, and would say to the young people: "Next round I will stop with So-and-So. Bring all your notebooks, and let us have a 'singing.'" Thus I made their acquaintance and got close to them.

The pay of a preacher was one hundred dollars per year. This they paid in full. We reported one hundred conversions and additions that year. I left the work with about forty dollars in my pocket. They paid but little, but never allowed the preacher to pay for anything he needed. A suit or two of clothes, boots, hats, etc., were presents common in those days. I visited all I could; organized Sunday-schools in the spring; had two camp meetings on the work; was called to but one funeral during the year.

A thousand things connected with this first year of my ministry I must leave unwritten here. The country was wild and mountainous. The Big Black, the Roane, the Bald, the Yellow and the Lynnville Mountains were all in the circuit, the people simple and hospitable in their manners.

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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Conference met that fall (1851) at my old home Athens, Tenn. Thus an opportunity was afforded me of meeting father and mother and other home folks. What a delight! Bishop Andrew was in the chair, and D. R. McAnally was secretary. I was read out to Asheville Station, N. C. This made me tremble, and I went with much humility to undertake the unequal task. On my way I spent a night with John Harle, near the mouth of "Chucky," one of the best men I ever knew. He went with me next morning some two or three miles to show me how to ford "Chucky River" safely at its mouth. He stood on the bank and directed, "Up a little now;" and then, "To the right carefully;" now, "Down to the going out place." Safely over, I waved him a good-bye and moved on.

Asheville was but a flourishing village then (1851). I found a membership of about three hundred in the town, and among them the celebrated Vance family, Robert Vance, afterwards a general in the Confederate army and a member of Congress, was Sunday-school superintendent and class leader. His wife was Mary McElroy, of Burnsville. I had the pleasure of being at their wedding a year

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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before, while I was on the Burnsville circuit. His mother, the widow of David Vance, resided here; and his brother, Zebulon, then just grown up to manhood, afterwards the world-renowned "Zeb Vance, of North Carolina," Congressman, General, Governor, Senator, etc. His sister, Ann (now the beloved wife of Dr. R. N. Price), was then the bright, attractive young leader of the social and religious circles of the village. Here, with their charming families, were Messrs. Nick and John Woodfin, the head of a law firm; and here "Old Uncle John Regnold," a superannuated member of the Holston Conference, with his dear old motherly wife and some hearty young sons. I boarded with them that year in the Carolina House. Here, too, was the Asheville Female College, then a Conference school, Rev. E. Rowley, president. The boarding pupils and faculty filled one-fourth of the church on Sunday mornings, and often embarrassed me by their presence. The Robertses, Smiths, Beards, Rankins, Edneys, etc., were there.

The year was in many respects a pleasant and successful one. We had a gracious revival during the year. Those were the

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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days of camp meetings everywhere. I attended three. One was out in Haywood County, I think—at least out near the Indian Reservation, at Shook's Camp Ground. Here on Monday night occurred a singular incident. Brother Hicks, presiding elder, had preached a strong sermon, and many penitents came to the front for prayer. After a lengthy altar service, such of the congregation as desired to do so were permitted to retire. I went to the preacher's tent and to bed. But sleep did not come—no pain, no trouble of any kind. All was quiet, save two or three voices out under the shed—sometimes a stanza of some old song in a low tone, then again a prayer, then words of exhortation. One of the voices was evidently that of a woman. I listened, trying to sleep, but sleep had fled. I conceived the little group lingering there at the altar to be a wife who had prayed long for a wicked husband, and, finding that husband penitent, she had enlisted the sympathy and help of a local preacher or class leader to remain with her to pray and encourage the poor sinner. This exercise had lasted, it seemed to me, till midnight. Somehow I felt like I ought to go out there; and, getting up, I dressed and



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went out, I knew not why. There, near to the stand, under the dim light of a single tallow candle, which was burning low in the wooden sconce, I saw the three, much as I conceived of before I came out. I did not go to them, but took my seat twenty or twenty-five feet away. Why, I did not know. Then there came into mind an old song I used sometimes to sing. It was a sort of dialogue between a Christian and a sinner. Immediately I began to sing it. It ran thus:

"Come, think on death and judgment,  
Your time is almost spent;  
You've been a wretched sinner,  
'Tis time that you'd repent."

Here the sinner puts in some excuses. Finally the Christian ends his pleadings with this:

"But what if you lie down to-night,  
Supposing all is well,  
And should your eyes be closed in death,  
Your soul awake in hell?"

Sinner says:

"My case would then be awful,  
I now begin to see;  
I pray the Lord have mercy!  
Have mercy, Lord, on me!"

I sang these simple words, and, without speaking to any one, went back to bed and to

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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sleep. Often I wondered at the whole thing, but could never understand it.

Seven years after this I was stationed in Chattanooga, E. F. Sevier, presiding elder. In midsummer he was in feeble health. My wife had gone to her father's at Jonesboro, with our first child, then about one year old. Brother Sevier said: "I have three quarterly meetings which I wish you would hold for me. I will fill your pulpit here while you are gone. He lived in Chattanooga then. Of course, I consented. The meetings were to be at Ducktown, Tenn., Murphy, N. C., and Coker's Creek, Tenn. I held the meeting at Ducktown, and spent most of the week there, interested in the copper works. Saturday I went to the Murphy meeting. It was on the Murphy Circuit, but not in the town of Murphy. At the close of the morning services I assisted the pastor in Quarterly Conference. When we were through, a brother came and spoke to me, and said: "You don't know me, but I know you." When I inquired where I had met him, he said: "Do you remember the Monday night at Shook's Camp Ground, when you came out of the preacher's tent about midnight and sang a song about death and

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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judgment?" "Yes," I said, "and I've never known why." "Well," he replied, "I was there and was restless that night, had walked about till just before you came out, and then took my seat against a post at the upper end of the shed, in the dark, and was listening to the three who lingered under the dim light near the pulpit, when you came out and sang that song. The last lines filled me with trembling, and as you went back I resolved to be a better man from that moment. I sought and found pardon, joined the Church. To-day I am a local preacher and on my way to glory, thankful to God for that Monday night at Shook's Camp Ground." "Well, well," I said, "here, after seven years, I see in part the meaning of that strange night." And so I conclude that no man knows just when he is doing his best work. Only to follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit and leave results to him is always safe. Strange things will often occur. The explanation will come by and by.

## XIV

### *CHEROKEE PREACHERS*



HERE were five or six Cherokee Indians at the meeting of which I wrote in the last chapter at Shook's Camp Ground. Among them were two local preachers of our Church, Old Charley and Black Fox. I was very much interested in the company, and often sought opportunity to talk with them. They had an interpreter along, a "half-breed." Their grave and devout manners in time of worship were very marked. Indeed, they were at all times very serious, not to say grum. They rarely ever smiled, and never laughed a hearty, open laugh. When they talked among themselves, I noticed they did not move their lips, like other folks; and on inquiry I found they had but few, if any, labial sounds in their language. So I began to try all the Indian names of rivers, mountains, towns, etc., known to me, and found that I could pronounce or sound them without putting my lips together, thus: Chattanooga, Ocoee,

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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Tennessee, Coosa, Unaka, and so on for fifty or more names. The accent was always on the last syllable, and was a sort of grunt. I wondered if their language had not been constructed, or grown, out of their characteristic fondness for secrecy. Two of them ten feet away from you might be talking, but you could not see their mouths move. As Conference was to be in Asheville that fall, I asked Old Charley and Black Fox to come and see their "big brothers." They did. At an evening service for preaching I told Old Charley that I would call on him to pray after the sermon. He prayed in his own language; and while we could not understand what he said, we felt sure that our common Father understood him. His voice was very soft, and even musical at the first, but grew loud and almost vehement before he closed. We all said "Amen," and were glad that our God understood Cherokee.

This Asheville Conference was the first I had to entertain, and I found plenty of work locating and taking care of the preachers. The Conference was not so large then, as there were no lay delegates. Bishop Capers came on a few days beforehand, and I had the

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pleasure of entertaining him. This year I received deacon's orders. The sessions were held in the college chapel. My appointment this year was to the Jonesboro Station. I took public conveyance (had no horse), and got to Jonesboro Saturday evening, October 2, 1852. I stopped at the hotel. Next day I preached twice, and had the pleasure of meeting many of my people. Here I found a good membership in a good, new church. The colored membership was large, and I usually preached for them at three in the afternoon in the Sunday-school room, which was the basement. Jonesboro was then the best town between Knoxville and the State line, Bristol. There was no Bristol then; it was known as James King's big meadows, post office, Sapling Grove. The legal profession was very strong at Jonesboro: James W. Deadrick, T. A. R. Nelson, S. J. W. Luckey, John Blair, Landon Haynes, William Maxwell, T. D. Arnold, John Aiken, and others. A historic old town was Jonesboro, once the capital of the State of Franklin.

Here and hereabouts the Seviars and Tiptons had their long and bitter struggle for political supremacy. At this time Odd Fellowship

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was very popular in East Tennessee. Many of the best citizens were members of the order, and they turned their attention to the cause of education—very wisely, as I think—and used their organization to establish and maintain schools. The lodge at Rogersville established the Odd Fellows' Female College there, and conducted it for years. It is now the synodical College of the Presbyterian Church.

The lodge at Abingdon, Va., undertook a very extensive school enterprise, and spent a good deal of money on it; but a little later it was turned over to our Church, and is now our Martha Washington, the oldest of our Holston female colleges. The lodge at Jonesboro, made up of the best citizens of the town and county, projected a similar enterprise and established an Odd Fellows' Female College there in 1853. Rufus P. Wells, pastor of the Presbyterian Church, and I were elected associate principals. I consented to the arrangement as a temporary "supply," not dreaming that I should ever become a schoolman. And yet four-fifths of the time since that have I been a teacher. How little one knows what his life shall be! I fully expected

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to be a regular field hand, but Providence put me in the shop. I am sure it did not once occur to me to be anything but a traveling Methodist preacher. Nor did my acceptance of the position in this school involve a change of purpose. The school prospered. Our music teacher was Miss Chisom, from Fort Smith, Ark. She was a Cherokee quadroon, and carried strong marks of her Indian blood and was a good musician and a sensible, practical woman. This was at a time when the E. T. & V. R. R. was being graded. Mr. R. L. Owen was chief engineer, and afterwards became President of the road. He and Miss Chisom and I boarded at the same hotel. To make the story short, he courted and married her. I had the pleasure of officiating at the wedding, and Miss A. R. Blair, mentioned elsewhere, was bridesmaid. He took his bride to Lynchburg, his native town. To them were born two sons—Otway and Robert L., manly young fellows who used to visit us with their mother when they were but lads. Otway, I think, died young. After the death of Mr. Owen, she took her son, now grown and educated in a Virginia college, back to the Territory. I see stated in the papers



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of this week that "Robert L. Owen, who is one-eighth Cherokee, has been nominated by the Democrats for a seat in the United States Senate, at Muskogee, Ind. T." Bravo! Bravo! Well, Robert is no milksop, I'll warrant you, and his good tomahawk will be a match for Mr. Tillman's pitchfork.

This year I attended a camp meeting at the celebrated Brush Creek Camp Ground site, now within the corporate limits of Johnson City. Here, some years before, occurred a fearful tragedy at a night service during a thunderstorm, which resulted in the death of two very popular young people by a stroke of lightning. Rev. N. G. Taylor gave me an account of it. The young people killed were Mr. ——— Gillespie and his betrothed, Miss Mary Taylor, sister of N. G. Taylor, then a young man, and aunt of Hon. Robert L. Taylor, of the United States Senate. Mr. Gillespie and Miss Taylor were standing in the door of a tent only a few feet back of the preacher's stand, and Taylor said he was sitting in the tent, near by, listening to William Milburn preach on the judgment, and that a feeling of awful solemnity seemed to burden the air. This I can well believe; for when William

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Milburn preached on the judgment it was awful preaching, and I doubt not the sermon and the lightning and thunder were in unison. Taylor said there were three strokes of lightning in quick succession, the first some little distance up the valley, the second much nearer. The third did the fearful work, killing the two and prostrating many others. Brother Taylor said he was unconscious for a few minutes, and when restored found that "the red-winged messenger had taken my beautiful sister almost right out of my arms." Then he gave a graphic description of the awful scene. How I wish I could produce the word-painted picture which he drew of that midnight of horrors—its blackness of darkness, the rain coming down in floods, the bellowing thunder literally shaking the earth as the vivid lightning threatened to set the whole encampment on fire; the awe-struck assembly in the greatest terror and confusion, some praying, some screaming, and all rushing here and there in blind distraction. The bodies of the two young lovers were placed side by side on the straw under the shed.

N. G. Taylor was perhaps a more eloquent and graphic delineator of tragic scenes than

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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either his honored sons, Robert L. or Alf A. I stood with him on the very spot in the very tent door where young Gillespie and Mary Taylor stood when the bolt struck them, and heard him tell the gruesome story, his lips quivering and his eyes half filled with tears. I had the pleasure of preaching to him and his wife and "Old Black Mammy" at three o'clock Sunday evening at that meeting, Bob and Alf being little chaps then. That Taylor family is now on my list of long-time friends, and my recollections of many tokens of love from them is very pleasant. Mrs. Taylor was a queenly person, a very brilliant woman, a fine conversationalist, and a charming musician, and, mark you, mother of "The Fiddle and the Bow." She was a sister of Landon C. Haynes, perhaps the most captivating orator these East Tennessee hills ever gave to the country. I seem to see her now, like Cornelia, daughter of Scipio Africanus and mother of the immortal Gracchi, standing between her two sons, saying, "*Haec ornamenta mea sunt*" ("These are my jewels")—honored sons of a noble ancestry, as worthy of immortality as Tiberius and Caius of classic story!

## XV

### *DEATH OF JAMES H. CARDWELL.*



IN the last chapter we were at Jonesboro, Tenn. (1853), and I was closing my third year in the ministry at old Brush Creek Camp Meeting. The most memorable occurrence of this year was the death of my brother-in-law, James H. Cardwell, of Abingdon, Va. My sister wrote me of his sickness, and requested me to come to them. She was in delicate health, with a babe only a few weeks old in her arms. I went at once, and found him very low in the last stages of typhoid fever; but his mind was clear and his faith triumphant. He was a dear, good man. I perhaps had not known a better—a class leader and a Sunday-school superintendent, a fine singer and mighty in prayer, a man of fine social qualities, who loved and enjoyed life. He had an interesting young family, a wife and five children; and now the end was nigh, when he must surrender all his cherished plans for

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life and leave his wife a widow and his children fatherless. He had been an elder brother to me when I was at Emory and Henry College, ten miles away. I was almost crushed as I stood by his bed, with his little family stunned by the unutterable sorrow that fell like a bolt upon their heads and hearts. That night I persuaded sister to take the children to her room and let me watch. We were alone—Cardwell and I. A little fire flickered on the hearth, and in the stillness the clock seemed to tick unusually loud. We talked some of days gone by, and some of his wife and children, but most of the future. He did not believe that he could get well, and then he spoke of God's love in Christ Jesus and his promise to be a husband to the widow and a father to his children. His eyes filled with tears; and then, restraining himself a moment, he said: "Brother, they will not let me shout and praise my God; and I wanted you to come, for I knew you would." I said: "Brother, we are hoping that you may get well, and we want you to husband your strength." He was silent. After a few moments, I took my seat before the fire with my back toward him; and soon I heard a whisper—a deep whisper—coming

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from his bed. I stole a look back, and there he was, with his face turned right up toward heaven, and he was putting his hands together and then separating them and bringing them together again while in the act of clapping them; and then he said, "Glory to God! glory to God!" in a whisper. That midnight hour I have never forgotten. I have never felt nearer to God and heaven, perhaps, than at that silent hour. The memory of it comes into the recollections of an old man as he looks back, like a traveler, to the high places he has passed and sees the tops of the distant mountains still bathed in the mellow sunlight of a peaceful sunset.

Next morning it was apparent that he was growing more and more feeble, and we felt that the end was nigh. Sister said to me: "Watch, and don't let him get away without speaking to me and the children. Call us in time." The doctor came, and other friends; and soon I went and told sister to come in. She brought the children and the nurse with the baby. As soon as they entered the room, he seemed to understand what it meant and held out his hands and took the babe first and then each child in his arms and blessed it. And then,

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looking at his wife, he waited with outstretched arms for her to come; and with a short prayer he released her with a good-bye kiss, the last of earth. And from that moment he never seemed to know that he had a wife or a child—never spoke of them again. They had passed out of his earthly life. The nurse took the children into an adjoining room, where a number of weeping women had assembled. I took sister up in my arms, and half carried her, limp, from the room. A heartbroken sigh and a deep groan told how surely she felt the stroke that left her a widow with a group of orphan children. I could scarcely move her along, she seemed so reluctant to go. But to our astonishment, just as we passed through the door into the next room, she sprang from my arms and said: “Glory to God! No, this is not all—heaven and eternity are yet left!” And so she continued to walk up and down the room shouting, while we all wondered at the strange woman. The neighbor women looked at me with tear-filled eyes and said plainly enough: “What does all this mean?” I guessed at some things, but said nothing; for I could see only the outside. Then I caught her in my arms and laid her

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on the bed, where she became quiet, with a smile on her face, as with upturned gaze, she seemed to be looking far away at beautiful things. Next morning she said: "Brother, you were all surprised at my conduct yesterday when we came out of Henry's room. Well, when we left his bedside, I could think of nothing but good-bye forever. All was shut up—black as midnight. This is the last sad memory and buried hope. But just as we passed out of the room, there came back to me all in a moment, like a burst of light, the great truths he and I had so often talked of and loved so much—that death was not the end, that heaven and eternity were just on the other side. And I believed it all and blessed God for it." And she was ready to go to shouting again. It was all plain enough now, and we felt the joy of it. We buried the good man there in the good old town of Abingdon, among his friends, to await the trumpet that shall call the sleepers in Jesus. His wife joined him many years ago, going up with a shout. Mother died that way too—O so long ago! Dr. Daniel Trigg, the family physician, went out on the street, and to inquiring friends said that Cardwell was dead. And when he



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had told them of the deathbed scene, he added: "Friends, when I die I want to die Cardwell's way." And I have been saying, "Amen; me too," ever since.

And now, Mr. Editor and kind reader, this short chapter is to comply in part with the promise made sometime ago to continue the "Recollections of An Old Man." So I will, as the good Lord shall give me strength and guide my unskilled hand. I have written too little and talked too much in my time. Indeed, I think people talk too much; most men do, and some women.

I am charmed as we follow Dr. Richardson toward "sunset" with his war experience and things that happened this side of it—aye, this side of it! He and Price had a good time, I'll warrant, in that Mills River country among the Tarheels. There are no better people known to me. Richardson got a good deal out of that country in the love and friendship of the people; but Price got more; he got his wife there at Asheville, the sister of Genl. Bob and Hon. Zeb Vance. That makes me think of something. It was when he and I were associated in the faculty of Emory and Henry College. We had been drumming around the



**F. RICHARDSON**

**D. SULLINS**

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land for, say, two weeks together, when we stopped for dinner one day; and while the dinner was being prepared, Price said: "I must write to my wife." When he had finished his letter and was ready to back it, he had forgotten his wife's given name, and turned to me with: "What is my wife's given name?" I answered: "You married Ann Vance." "Yes—pshaw—Ann," he said, and so finished the letter. He was perhaps thinking about an editorial for the *Holston Methodist* (afterwards the *Midland*), of which he was then editor. Well, I was to see them the other day; and the old people are as cozy as cats in the corner, having light at evening time. And Richardson is their beloved pastor. Think of that! Dick and Frank together at Morristown, and Dave here at Cleveland, thinking and writing about them. Well, boys, we have worked in this field together nearly sixty years. It must be getting late, and nearly all our fellows have quit and gone home. Only another row or two at most to hoe. The whip-poor-will has begun his evening song up in the shaded hollow; and mother is coming down the hill to the well for milk and butter for supper, singing: "O heaven, sweet heaven, I long for thee!" Let's hurry up a little.

## XVI

### *MY THIRD APPOINTMENT*



CONFERENCE met this year (1853) at Wytheville, Va., Bishop Paine in the chair and W. C. Graves, secretary. When my name was called in the examination of character, my presiding elder, T. K. Catlett, rose and said in substance: "There is a report abroad that he has broken a marriage engagement, to his discredit." That put a stop to the passage of my character, and almost frightened me out of breath. But my friends asked for a committee of investigation. And I learned that a brother-in-law of the young lady went before the committee in her name and exonerated me. The committee so reported. I was never called before the committee. My character passed. And immediately the committee of public worship announced that I would preach at 3 p. m. This I did to a full house, many of whom, no doubt, were curious to see the young preacher who had a reputa-

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tion for fondness for the ladies. Well, I was humble and grateful and "had liberty;" and the dear old mothers helped the boy preach with many an "Amen" and "Glory to God." We had a good time, and the congregation took me fully into their confidence by an all-round hand-shaking. And the Bishop and the cabinet seemed to agree with the people, for I was appointed to the presidency of Strawberry Plains College, 1853-54. Another clap of thunder in a clear sky! A word about this school for the information of the young people and to preserve historical fact concerning our educational work in Holston. Emory and Henry had been founded some fifteen years before in the Virginia part of our territory; and the old school at New Market, under the presidency of Rev. Allen H. Matthews, had gone down. So we had no school in the southern part of our field, where one was much needed. Rev. Thomas Stringfield, one of our oldest and wisest leaders, lived at the Plains and owned a fine farm on the banks of the Holston River where the town of Straw Plains now stands. Mr. Stringfield donated some sixteen acres, on which was a grove of trees, for school

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purposes. Here were built some fairly good houses on the hill just east of where the town is situated, and for several years a school was conducted there under the name of Strawberry Plains College. Our now sainted James S. Kennedy, who had just graduated from Emory and Henry, was head master here for several years. And it was during these years that he courted and married Miss Stringfield, who became the mother of a large family of superior sons and daughters. Among them our honored missionary J. L. Kennedy, of Brazil. Brother Kennedy had left the school at the Plains, having accepted a professorship in the faculty of Randolph and Macon in Virginia. Mr. Stringfield was now an old man and no longer able to give the school much attention, and his family, which had been the strength of the enterprise, were grown up and gone, save Miss Mary (now Mrs. Ray, of Asheville, N. C.) and James, then away at college, who afterwards became a member of our Conference and much beloved by his brethren, a young man of great promise, but died young. Mrs. Butler, editor of the *Woman's Advocate*, another daughter, was then in Knoxville with her husband, a merchant. And Maj. William,

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another son, was, perhaps at Waynesville, N. C. The friends of the college were scattered, the school run down, the buildings out of repair and grounds neglected; so Mr. Stringfield asked and secured my appointment to it, hoping that something could be done to revive its fortunes. I went there after Conference, and finding matters as stated above, concluded that it was a hopeless job without money to make repairs, etc. I went back to Jonesboro. The buildings at Strawberry Plains were all burned during the war, I believe. And there is no trace of them left. Let me add another word about our Holston schools. Soon after the founding of Emory and Henry College, Rev John H. Brunner (now Dr.) began his wonder-working at Hiwassee College, which has weathered the storm of half a century and still flourishes. Success to Rev. Dr. Eugene Blake, who now has charge of it. It has a worthy history and is now, as I believe, one of the best schools for our young people in all our Holston country; is better equipped for thorough work to-day than ever before, in buildings and outfit. It is co-educational. Write to Rev. Dr. Eugene Blake for information, Hiwassee College, Tenn.



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I still held the position of associate principal in the college with Rev. R. P. Wells, of the Presbyterian Church. He and I found the double work of pastor and teacher very heavy. And so, by way of a little relief, we agreed that he should bring his congregation to my church on alternate Sunday nights and preach to both congregations, and I go alternate Sunday nights to his church with my people and preach. In this way we had an off night every other Sunday night. But his health soon failed, and he gave up the work. This greatly increased my work and responsibility. But I was young and strong physically, having developed bone and muscle on the farm until I was eighteen years old. And I have reason to this day, in my eighty-first year, to thank God for a strong and healthy body. So I shouldered the labors and cares of church and school. And I am glad I did, for as I now look back over the fifty-four intervening years to those days and note results, I gravely doubt if I have done five years of better work in all my life. True, the board of management of the school gave me superior assistants as teachers, and the whole town was in sympathy with the school. But that which now strikes

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me as most noteworthy during those years was the superior character of the girls and young women who attended school. No faculty ever had better material out of which to develop charming womanhood. Bear with me and note I am not bragging on myself, but on my pupils. The very best men of the land sought them for wives. Let me mention a few of them and the sensible men who married them: Virginia Blair, wife of Rev. Dr. W. E. Munsey; Eva Dulaney, wife of Rev. Dr. John Bachman, Chattanooga, Tenn.; Sallie Cunningham, wife of Rev. Nathan Bachman, Sweetwater, Tenn.; Jodie Burts, wife of Rev. W. H. Bates, of Holston Conference for twenty-nine years; Nannie Ripley, wife of Rev. J. N. S. Huffaker, twenty years a member of Holston; Eva Snapp, wife of Rev. A. A. Blair, sometime professor in Tennessee University; Sopha Hoss, wife of Rev. Dr. J. D. French, of Holston Conference, and Dora Hoss, wife of Judge S. J. Kirkpatrick, Johnson City, Tenn. (sisters of the Bishop); Irene Blair, wife of John E. Naff, of Holston; Ann Mary Deaderick, wife of the late W. T. Van Dyke, Esq., of Chattanooga; Laura Mitchell, wife of Judge J. F. J. Lewis, of Knoxville; Kitty

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Wilds, wife of the late Judge A. J. Brown, Greeneville, Tenn.; Ella Luckey, wife of the late Judge Jesse Gaut, of Cleveland, Tenn.; Issadore Deaderick, wife of Hon. J. A. Moon, Chattanooga, Tenn. (M. C.); Sallie Luckey, wife of the late Colonel Moore, of Dalton, Ga.; Sallie Foster, wife of Rev. Samuel Rhea, missionary to India; Eva Burts, wife of the late Hon. Felix Ernest, Johnson City, Tenn.; Mollie Dulaney, wife of M. M. Butler, M. D., Bristol, Tenn.; ——— Dulaney, wife of Judge C. J. St. John, Bristol, Tenn.; Ann Rebecca Blair, wife of D. Sullins, of Holston Conference for fifty-seven years; and others whose names do not occur to me at this writing, now after the lapse of fifty-four years. In addition to these, there are half a score and more wives of the most influential and successful merchants and farmers in the State. These men and their wives have had much to do in the shaping of public sentiment in the State; and especially in the religious life of this land for the last fifty years. Look over the list and say if I may not be a little proud of having had some humble part in the education of such a class of wives and mothers. This was my first four years as a teacher. Am I become a fool for boasting?

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Well, Paul says he was once. But there is a difference between Paul and me in this case, as in many others. He was provoked to it—I tempted. I hope the good women whose names I have used above will pardon the liberty I have taken.

## XVII

### REVIVAL IN SCHOOL



**D**URING this year (1854) we had a rather peculiar revival of religion, which was largely confined to the school. I say peculiar, and so it was in its origin and progress and otherwise. Read on and see. After school closed one Indian summer evening, we all came down from the hill on which the school buildings stood, the young ladies and smaller children (say a hundred and fifty) chatting and laughing as usual, a happy group, I bringing up the rear. I remember, as I looked over the long line moving down the sidewalk, there came suddenly and strangely a most tender solicitude for the salvation of the playful rompers. Some of them were Christians, I knew; but many were not. But why there should come just at that moment such a sense—a burdening sense—of responsibility and obligation upon me touching those young souls, I could not tell. I have always felt a strong desire for the salva-

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tion of my pupils, and prayed and planned for it; but here was something deeper and more solemn, authoritative, and seemed to say: "Now is the time." And with this there came what amounted to an assurance that if I would go right forward and hold a meeting the Lord would graciously sanction and bless the services. There was no special religious interest in the town, and I had not thought of such a meeting at that time; and yet this impression was so definite and strong that, without once thinking of what might be necessary for the success of such a meeting, or of the numerous difficulties in the way, I determined to make the appointment.

Now, this all took place while I was walking a hundred yards, perhaps. And so, going on down the street, I met two or three of my most active and helpful members; but I did not consult them as to whether we would have the meeting; that was settled. I simply told them there would be services in our church to-morrow night—come praying and trusting. I made the announcement to the school next day, after a few words of exhortation to the children, and invited them and the teachers to be present. The fight was now on, the responsibility as-

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sumed. Mr. Wells, pastor of the Presbyterian Church, was away from home. I had no ministerial help, and not much lay help. True, there was Uncle Jimmy Dillworth (about first cousin to Dillworth's spelling book, that was), the superintendent of the Sunday-school and the class leader, and a good right arm for any preacher. We had no organ, large or small (an organ would have frightened my people then), no choir and no leader of singing, no song book but our regular hymn book, and no preacher but me; and I (a poor three-year-old) had been pastor for a year, and had preached about all I knew and perhaps a little more, and had the school on my hands. A poor prospect, humanly speaking; and from the standpoint of to-day, should a pastor call his stewards to consider the question of a protracted meeting under such conditions, I think some would say: "Brethren, I don't think this the time; let us postpone till better weather and moonlight nights." In those days we did not have so many helpful external things to look to, so we looked almost entirely to the great promise, "Not by might, but by my Spirit," and God did the work. Brothers, our God has not

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yet lost the fine art of doing great things with little instruments. One might preach a word just here; but I am writing recollections, and so I go on. Well, the appointment got abroad in town, and when the time came for services I found the church well filled. This did not surprise me, for I thought it would be—why, I don't know. The official and working members of both congregations were present, and the young people were there, thoughtful and reverent. I did the little preaching; and by way of giving the keynote to the meeting, I sang a solo just before taking my text—a not uncommon thing for a preacher then, but much out of vogue now. The song was not in the book, so the people had only to listen; and I sang:

“Brethren, we have met to worship  
And adore the Lord our God.  
Will you pray with all your power  
While we try to preach the word?  
Brethren, see poor sinners round you  
Trembling on the brink of woe,  
Far from God and unconverted;  
Can you bear to let them go?  
Sisters, will you join and help us?  
Moses' sister aided him;  
Will you seek the trembling mourners  
Who are laboring hard with sin?  
Tell them all about the Saviour,



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Tell them that he will be found;  
Sisters, go exhort the mourners,  
Speak the word to all around."

This I sang, and more. And I did not mouth the words, nor sacrifice the sense and sentiment of the song for the sake of a half tone or crescendo in the melody. The people knew what was said. And when I sang, "Sisters, will you join and help us?" I could almost see the "Yes, we will" in their upturned faces, and it helped me. The meeting moved right off at a good gait. Conversions occurred in the church, in the homes, in the school, at recess, and under the trees on the campus. I preached at night, and taught during the day. We did not suspend the school. A word here: I am persuaded from experience that it is a mistake to suspend a school when the Lord sends a revival into it. Two duties can never conflict. Let the pupils know that it is religious to do their daily work; religion and duty are one. It may be well to modify the daily requirements some, but don't pull the bridle off the colts; they may caper beyond the fence, and "Satan will find mischief for idle hands to do." Let him that hath ears to hear listen.

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I gave myself no concern as to when the meeting should close. It was the Lord's meeting. He had begun it; and I, with cheerful submission, left it with Him to close it. It continued for some ten days; and when the time came to close it, I did so, satisfied that it was according to His will. The closing night was full of interest. After a genuine song service and some few words of exhortation, I opened the door of the Church (the first time during the services), and in doing so said in substance: "Those who want to join the Methodist Church, come and take your places here on these front seats to my left." Sixteen came, nearly all grown young ladies. Then I said: "I know that many of you who have started the new life are members of Presbyterian families and ought to go into the church with your parents. But Brother Wells is not here, and I want such of you as will go into the Presbyterian Church at the first opportunity to come to these seats at my right. I will take your names and report them to him when he gets home." And eight came. And so it was done. That was the first time I ever opened the door of the Presbyterian

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Church. The next time was when I broke into it and got my wife out a year later.

Now, that was my peculiar revival. Does some reader say: "I don't understand that sort of a meeting. Can you explain it?" I don't have to, thank God! It is like prophecy—interpreted by results. Let any man who has known East Tennessee for the last fifty years take the list of names of wives given in the last chapter, most of whom were converted in this revival, and note how much of the best found in the Church and State is justly ascribed to them and their families, and he will have an explanation that ought to be satisfactory. Here's my guess: The Head of the Church knew (yes, I believe in the foreknowledge of God) that these preachers and judges and lawyers and doctors and merchants and farmers would marry these women and largely direct the affairs of Church and State; and that it was very necessary that these girls should be converted, seeing that, like their royal sister of Shushan, they had "come to the kingdom for such a time"—*aye, such a time*. And so he used this strange revival to that end. And I thank Him for using me in an humble way for such a service.

## XVIII

### MARRIAGE



AFTER a pastorate of two years at Jonesboro (1852-53 and 1853-54), the Conference continued to return me to the school till the year 1857. During these years we had for our pastors T. J. Pope, Coleman Campbell, and J. N. S. Huffaker. Brother Pope did not fill out his time, and so I supplied the work in part. Coleman Campbell was a superior preacher, but had suffered with some paralysis of the muscles of the face. He was a sweet-spirited and charming companion. I used to sit behind him in the pulpit and listen and wonder at the grace and force of his utterances. He used a large red bandanna handkerchief, and occasionally flourished it about while preaching. Well, I was sitting behind him one day, and Campbell had put his red bandanna in his pocket, leaving one corner of it hanging out. Just then a piece of mischief crept into my head, and I had as well tell it,

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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or Bishop Hoss will tell it on me. My handkerchiefs were linen. I had not been married long, and my wife kept mine with hers; so when she gave me one, it filled the air with a delightful perfume. All right. I slipped Coleman's out of his pocket, and put mine in its place. Soon he had occasion to use his, and, as he thought, got it out and flourished it before his face. He hesitated a moment, looked at it, and passed it under his nose; and it would have "made a dog laugh" to see his face. Of course I was looking out of the window just then. Campbell turned half around to see me, and then rallied and went on. Hoss was a wide-awake boy in the congregation, and a piece of that sort of mischief by a preacher in church was not allowed to pass unnoticed or be forgotten.

In 1855 (May 3) I was married to Ann Rebecca Blair, youngest daughter of Hon. John Blair, who for some twelve years represented his district (the First) in Congress. My brother, Timothy, officiated. The Blair family was a large one. There were three brothers of the old stock—William K., John, and Robert. All came from Pennsylvania, were Presbyterians, and had large families.

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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So I was in a nest of bluestockings and akin to nearly everybody in the community. Wife and I had a home with her father for two years after marriage. The Conference had so readily consented to my appointment to the school for so many years that all seemed to think of nothing else but my return for another year. We began to think of having a home of our own in Jonesboro, maybe, for years. Mr. Blair gave my wife a nice house and lot adjoining his. We went to work, busy as a pair of birds preparing a nest. We repainted and papered, got carpets, furnished kitchen, dining room, parlor, and bedrooms, bought a cow, and filled the pantry. This was in the fall of 1857, just before Conference at Marion. Mr. Blair suggested that we should not make a fire in the cooking stove, but leave all clean and new for our use when we should return from Conference. And so we did. The school was flourishing. It had about one hundred and seventy-five pupils, and the Board had made the usual application to the Conference for my return. Everything was lovely. Our firstborn was six months old. So we went to Conference in fine spirits, and could hardly wait to go into our new home

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and go to keeping house by ourselves, like other folks. Well, to get over a boggy place as quickly as possible, let me take a running start and jump and tell you at once: We did not get back to live in our house, and it was sixteen years before we ever had another. We were read out to go to Chattanooga, and our appointment almost came last in the list. Wife and I sat together, and she took my arm and we moved right out of the house and started to our home; neither spoke, as far as I know. We had not walked perhaps twenty steps from the church door when I felt some one touch me on the back, and, turning, to my surprise found it was Bishop Early, who said hurriedly: "Brother Sullins, you will go?" I answered without a moment's hesitation and emphatically: "Certainly, Bishop, I will go." He said no more, but "God bless you." Ten thousand things rushed through my mind and heart—thoughts flying to all points of the compass. A cyclone and tornado and an earthquake had all struck us at the same time. My answer to the Bishop made all clear to my wife. We were going to Chattanooga; that at least was fixed, and it was well. Nothing

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debatable, we had only to shape all our plans to that end. Fortunately, she and I had talked over the fact of my relations to the Conference before we were married, and it was definitely understood that I should always hold myself ready to do any work as a Methodist preacher the Church might require. I also had the same understanding with the trustees of the school; my staying with them depended on the approval of my Conference. These facts made matters much easier than they otherwise would have been. But what a destruction of plans and cherished hopes, especially for my wife! As far as I now recollect, neither of us ever went into that house or got anything out of it. I told Mr. Blair to take the whole thing, cow and all, and do as he liked with it; we were going to Chattanooga. O, it was so hard on wife! But I owe it to the devotion and fidelity of the true, wifely woman (now in heaven for six years) to say that she never said a word to hinder or delay our movements, nor did she allow others to do so.

Everything was put on the run to get us off, and in less than ten days we were ready to say good-bye. Conference met that year on October 22. It was now the middle of



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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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November. We took the train, and ran to Limestone, eleven miles. Limestone was then the terminus of the road going west. There was no railroad from there to Bull's Gap, the terminus going east. This left a gap of some forty miles. Fortunately for us, my wife's oldest brother, William P. Blair, was running a hack line over this gap. So, when we got to Limestone, we took a hack and went a mile or two to Mr. Miller's, where we spent the night. Next morning, to our surprise and great regret, the snow was five or six inches deep. Nothing daunted us; we bundled up and struck out. By supper, at dark, we got to Blue Springs (now Mosheim). This left us about fourteen or fifteen miles of mud and slush to Bull's Gap. The night was dark and cold. We got to the Gap at one that night. There was no hotel, just a little shack by the roadside. We ran in, but found no room empty. So we got some mattresses and made beds on the floor before the fire. The train was to leave next morning a little before daylight. This was Friday night; and we must get to Chattanooga next day to meet my first appointment on Sunday, and we could not afford to miss that morning train.

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A little uneasy sleep, fearing croup in the baby, and then up and off at daylight for Chattanooga. It was a new road, and the train went at a dog trot and stopped everywhere. We got to Chattanooga at night, and found the snow all gone. The train stopped in the woods at the Crutchfield (now Read) House. There were then, perhaps, not a dozen houses from the Read to the foot of Missionary Ridge. We had neither of us ever been to Chattanooga. It was a rambling little town of possibly less than two thousand inhabitants. Indeed, it had but lately donned its big Indian name, Chattanooga (Potato House), and begun to put on town ways. It had been known as "Ross' Landing." Here Jack Ross, the Cherokee chief, lived, where Rossville is; and here supplies of all sorts came down the river to this landing. Salt from King's Salt Works, Saltville, Va., on the head of Clinch River, found a good market here. We called it King's salt to distinguish it from a coarser salt we called Goose Creek, which came from Goose Creek, Ky. Here the good Indians and the mean white men, who were always poking themselves in among them, got their supplies in the thirties and before.

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Well, it was Saturday night when we arrived. We knew but two families in the town. Mrs. John W. White was a cousin of Mrs. Sullins; Tom Crutchfield, proprietor of the hotel, and his wife, Amanda King, were old friends of mine. We were all brought up in McMinn County. Tom and I read Cæsar together under Pat. Samuel at Forrest Hill Academy, and hunted rabbits at recess. We went immediately to his hotel, and here we were cordially received and comfortably quartered. Very tired and almost sick, wife and the baby were soon asleep, while I tried to get myself together and think of what I should say to the people to-morrow. This was almost the first really quiet hour I had had since we received our appointment. Those three weeks had been filled with turmoil for head, heart, and hand. The appointment had distressed me. There was little prospect of success in the new railroad town. But I had promised the Lord when I was but fifteen years old that if He would give me peace of mind and grace to do so, I would be a preacher. And that meant be a traveling Methodist preacher; I never thought of anything else. I now felt like I was in the line and no mistake. I had a good case of it well developed. So I said, "Lord, help me;" and He did. More anon.

## XIX

### *YEAR AT CHATTANOOGA.*



THE last chapter brought us to Chattanooga Saturday night. Sunday morning found us in the Crutchfield House, strangers, looking about and inquiring for the location of the Methodist church and time for Sunday-school, etc. We found the church up on what is called High Street, I believe—where the colored folks now have a large brick church. I went to Sunday-school and found the house to be a small wooden structure, with a pepper-box looking affair on the top. The bell was a spice mortar which was kept in the wood-house. This the sexton pounded with his pestle to call us to worship. Mr. P. McMillin was superintendent and class leader. He gave us a cordial welcome, and answered my many questions concerning the work, which he seemed to have both on his head and heart. A genuine right-hand man for the new preacher; knew how to be helpful with wise counsel and

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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sympathy. His earnest Christian wife was the daughter of Robert Cravens and niece of the late Dr. G. E. Cunnyingham. This excellent family came right up to us and put sunshine into that first Sunday and became our stand-bys throughout the year. What a treasure such a family is for the preacher! Lord, send us such laymen in all our Churches! At the eleven o'clock hour there was a fair congregation present. Among them were the Cravens, the Ragsdales (William and Baxter), the McMillins (P. and D. C.), the Hodges, the Van Epps, the Parhams, the Crutchfields, the Lyles, and others, who came at the close of the services and gave us a welcoming handshake, which made us feel like we had a people. The stewards had a meeting Monday, and secured board for us with John W. White, Esq., at forty dollars per month. Mrs. White was cousin to Mrs. Sullins. They had grown up together at Jonesboro. Never mind about our salary; I really do not remember. In fact, I do not believe the question of our support was discussed or mentioned. We had no assessment plan in those days. The old Methodist rule was about this: The people needed a preacher; the Church sent

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them one: they were expected to take care of him, and he was expected to take what the people furnished him. If this fell short of meeting his needs, he was to look for the deficit when he got to heaven; it was never made up here. The disciplinary rule of one hundred dollars for a single man and two hundred dollars for a married one was about obsolete. With this sort of tacit understanding—of get what you can and live on it—we went to work.

Rev. E. F. Sevier was presiding elder and lived in the town. Perhaps Holston never had a more cultured, charming, scholarly preacher. His clearness in statements of doctrine and lawyer-like probing into and treatment of his text were more intellectual than emotional, but always instructive and pleasing. His rhetoric was almost faultless, and his delivery captivating. He was princely in person—straight and dignified, with traces of his ancestral Huguenot blood, and as polite as a Frenchman. He was akin to Nollchucky Jack, the gallant leader of many an Indian fight, and no whit his inferior. Our good Bishop Hoss is a younger member of that old game stock.

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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The health of Mrs. White failed, and we had to look for new quarters. About this time Tom Crutchfield sent me word (no telephones then) to come and go squirrel hunting with him. This I gladly did. It seemed like old times, when we were boys together. When we were ready to start, he suggested that we go to Missionary Ridge for fox squirrels, and we did so. That day I killed on the top of the Ridge, a little west of the tunnel, at Sherman Heights, the last fox squirrel I ever saw in the woods. On our way home, the hunt over, five or six nice, fat fellows bagged and in the bottom of the buggy, I began to think of home and work. And by way of getting his help to find a boarding house, I told him that Mrs. White was in feeble health and we had to move, and asked him if he could tell us where we could find a suitable home. He thought a moment, and then said: "Come to the hotel. We will let you have a nice suite of rooms, and you can use the parlor to meet your friends." I answered: "That would be delightful, but the stewards will not pay but forty dollars per month for our board—wife, nurse, baby, and myself—and that is far below the price

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you get for such board." He simply replied: "I will take you at forty per month; come on." That was Tom's big-hearted way of doing generous things. When we got to the hotel, we told his wife about it. She was pleased and said: "Tell Mrs. Sullins to come at once; her rooms will be ready." This we did, and occupied a suite of delightful rooms. The two ladies were much together, and Mrs. Crutchfield often drove wife to return calls and make special visits to the poor and sick. This helped them both religiously, as well as socially and physically. We were very comfortable; but the year was getting away, and there had been no revival, though there were many sinners around. This troubled us. I have always felt that something is wrong when any people with a pastor and an organized church at his back can spend a whole year and no revival, no souls saved. I think so now. Well, there were three regular pastors in town—Mr. Bradshaw (Presbyterian), Mr. Templeton (Cumberland), and myself. There were some good Baptists and a few Episcopalians, but they had no pastors. So we three got together and agreed to conduct a union service. We were to spend a week in each of our



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churches, beginning with Bradshaw's. This we thought would end the meeting; but it was a glorious mistake; for the "Lord was in that place" and had large things for us. We began in Bradshaw's church, which stood on the east side of Market Street, between Seventh and Eighth—the site long since occupied by large commercial houses. We took it time about in preaching, but had no choir or organ. I had to start the tunes mostly and carry on the singing till the spirit moved the people to sing. By Friday night the people filled the house, and many were at the "mourner's bench" and several converted. Saturday we moved to my church. It was the time of my third quarterly meeting. Brother Sevier, the presiding elder, preached in the morning, and Brother Templeton at night—a great day. We were all to have regular services Sunday in our own churches in the morning and come together for the night services, and so we did. And now for another week the Lord shook the town, and sinners cried for mercy and found it. When Saturday came, we moved to Brother Templeton's church. The meeting did not chill going from one church to another. In fact, the whole town was getting religiously

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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hot, and you could carry a revival meeting anywhere about in it. Well, we stayed that week, with glorious results, in Templeton's church. We had now made the round of the churches, as we agreed to do at the beginning; but such was the state of religious sentiment that no one thought of closing the meeting. So we went back to Brother Bradshaw's church, starting on the second round. This, the fourth Sunday night, was marked by wonderful spiritual power. There was an awe-inspiring sense of the divine presence pervading the vast assembly. The church was rallying everywhere with song and prayers and exhortation, and sinners—old, hardened sinners, trembled and fell down before God and cried for mercy.

The meeting could now "stand alone," as we say—could run without a preacher. The people gathered before the hour of service, not to gossip, but to worship. Brother preacher, you have been along there. How delightful it was as you hurried on to the church to meet a great burst of song a hundred yards before you got there! No one had been requested to open or lead the services, and yet the congregation was worshipping, and the

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great volume of music told you that all were singing; and strong, jubilant voices, unheard before, told you that new converts were among the singers—Saul was among the prophets. We had no collection of songs suited to revival work then as we have now, nor were our churches supplied with hymn books. This was not perhaps wholly evil; for while it was a drawback in one direction, it worked well in another. It will be found true—as I have had occasion again and again to note—that the Spirit uses ten or a dozen out of the great multitude of songs to do service through a revival of weeks, repeating them at every hour. Sometimes just one song takes the lead through a great meeting; it may be an old one fallen out of use for a time. I remember having been called from Emory, Va., twenty-five years ago to assist good Brother B. W. S. Bishop in a revival at Kelley's Chapel. At night the meeting was moving at a fair gait when some one started the old hymn, "When I Can Read my Title Clear," etc.; and instantly the atmosphere seemed charged with spiritual power, everybody sang, and many wept for joy. I couldn't understand it, and asked later what it meant. "Why,

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the revival started when we were singing that old song, and we have repeated it at every service since." A great variety of new songs tends to divide the mind of the worshipper rather than promote devotion. Fancy singing is fatal to any revival. Familiarity with the words and tunes is favorable to devout singing; the mind of the singer can then be given to the one thing of "making melody in the heart." Well, by repeating, the people became familiar with some of our best old hymns—words and tunes—and they all sang them again and again with full hearts. I am not quite sure but that this may in a measure account for the fact that we Methodists *were* called a singing people. (Note the tense of that verb "were.") Our experimental religion filled our hearts with joy and gladness, and our good old hymns gave delightful expression to those happy feelings; and so we sang them lustily and often, book or no book.

In this way the children and most illiterate, even the negroes, learned these oft-repeated songs and made the welkin ring again in their great meetings. O to hear and feel them as I have heard and felt them in many a revival, and not a book in the assembly! Let's all

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sing, without the book, to the old tune of  
Greenfield (now Nettleton):

“Come thou Fount of every blessing,  
Tune my heart to sing thy grace;  
Streams of mercy, never ceasing,  
Call for songs of loudest praise.”

## XX

### *GRÉAT REVIVAL*



WE had now reached the fourth Monday in our great meeting. The church was crowded at the morning hour, and souls converted. We felt that God had given us the victory; the town was ready to surrender; the revival had the right of way everywhere. After a little consultation, we determined to move up and sweep the field and demand an unconditional surrender to God's cause. So we requested that every house of business of every kind be closed for the next day, and that the people spend the day worshipping God. This met universal approval. All houses closed, not simply for the usual hour of worship, but shut up, like Sunday, all day long. Many of the business men fasted, did not go to their places of business at all, and spent the day in church mostly.

An incident will show how sacredly the people observed that day: Uncle Antipas

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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Moore, who lived on Missionary Ridge, was in the habit of furnishing beef to the town on Tuesdays. So this morning, as usual, he came in with his beef; but finding no house open and no one on the streets, he drove on down Market Street nearly to the river and turned back, not knowing what it all meant till a friend told him. Then he left for home. A neighbor met him, and inquired: "What is up, Uncle Antipas?" "Well," said the old man, in no very pleasant mood in view of losing his meat, "that town has gone crazy; there is not a house open; nobody will talk to you about business; it's just like Sunday clean down to the river—I drove all the way down. Just as well take your taters back; you can't sell anything to-day." Antipas Moore was the father of the brave Colonel B. F. Moore, of the Nineteenth Tennessee Regiment, who fell in the battle of Missionary Ridge fighting around his old home. Well, that Tuesday was a red-letter day in the revival, and has been such in the religious life of Chattanooga for fifty years now. It is marked on some of the old business books of that day in the town: "The Tuesday-Sunday." There were thirty-four conversions

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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that day—many in the church, some in the homes, and some on the streets. Among them was the now sainted Rev. J. L. M. French, who for thirty-two years cultivated many fields in Holston, and then laid down his tools and went home, fifteen years ago. I was by his side with my hand on his head when the Glory broke in. He was a superior preacher, and a sweeter, better pastor no people ever had. He was the father of the Rev. Dr. J. Stewart French, of Atlanta, Ga.—“a chip off the old block.”

We had taken high ground now in the revival, and were aggressive. Just at this stage of the meeting there occurred what will be found to be almost universally true; that whenever any great religious or moral movement comes aggressively into any community, then the devil bestirs himself and rallies all his forces and uses all means and methods to oppose it. And mark you, he always covers his real design under the semblance of some good; never attacks openly or at a strong point. Just as it was when “Jesus was led up into the wilderness.” After his forty days’ fast, he was hungry; then to the hungry Man the tempter came, and in the most simple man-



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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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ner possible innocently suggested bread, nature's remedy for hunger, to which all hungry men have an unquestioned right; you need bread and ought to have bread; it is the divinely appointed duty of all men to provide bread for themselves against the days of hunger; and so you should, if need be, even "command those stones to be bread." It was bread, you see, good bread, innocent bread, that never hurts any man, that the tempter kept before the hungry eyes of the hungry Man, purposely concealing all the while his develish design of leading the Master into a great sin. And, again, as it was in the case of the adulterous woman whom they brought to Jesus, ostensibly desiring him to condemn a great *sin*, the which he was forward to do; whereas their real object was to get him to pronounce sentence, as a civil officer, against an individual *sinner*, "that they might have whereof to accuse him." And to encourage him to walk into their net, they quote Scripture: "Now Moses commanded us to stone such. What sayest thou? Of course you will say so too." One can hardly say, as he reads the story, which moves him most, the calmness of the Man under this cross-fire as he quietly writes in the sand,

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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"as though he did not hear them," or the villainous craft and hypocrisy of his enemies. The trap was well set, calculated to "deceive the very elect." But Jesus had met the deceiver before in their bout in the wilderness, and knew his wily ways. His answer was a bomb-shell among them, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her;" as much as to say: "You want sin condemned; look at home, and you may find something to do there." This turned their thoughts from their evil purpose of entrapping him to their personal sins. "And being convicted by their own conscience, they went out one by one." Amen. He who reads his Bible will not fail to see that this designing of evil under the appearance of good is a favorite device of Satan. There is nothing hardly so utterly bad but that something commendable may be found in it. To cry up that good and thereby conceal the evil in any action has the very essence of the enemy's trick in it. See how this works in the great temperance movement of to-day, February 14, 1908. Distillers and saloonists, and indeed everybody knows there is great money in the whisky business. The Federal government

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(Congress) has found that out. And the revenue from the dirty business is the only thing they talk about—money for public schools, corporation expenses, taxes, etc. And, O, the sweet speeches they make for the dear children in Dixie and the dear people who have to pay the taxes, etc.! But never a word about the wretchedness unutterable that does and must follow. To ask for a license is to ask for the privilege to make drunkards in all our homes. But this is kept in the background, never mentioned. There is revenue in it. Old Cloven Foot still at his old tricks. From all such may the good Lord deliver us!

It is safe to say that there is not an honest, thoughtful man in any corporation or state who does not know that the cost of crime legitimately traceable to alcohol far surpasses the revenue derived from the license system. And this is true, to say nothing of the unutterable ruin to the individual drinker, soul and body, and to the family in all that makes the home happy, and also to the peace and good order of society. To make drunkards is essential to the whisky business. If men do not drink, then the saloon and distillery are out of business. This was announced by one of the

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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speakers in a sort of love feast held by the "State Liquor Dealers" in Ohio. He was speaking on the question, "How to Build Up the Saloon Business," and said: "The success of our business is dependent largely upon the creation of appetite for drink. . . . . The open field for the creation of appetite is among boys. It will be needful, therefore, that we do missionary work among the boys; and I make the suggestion gentlemen, that nickels spent in treating boys now will return in dollars to your tills after the appetite has been formed. Above all things, create appetite." There is the big toe of Cloven Foot. Such a fiendish speech as that ought to drive every saloon and distillery out of the land. May a merciful God save our boys!

But these are reflections and not recollections. And so I dismiss them to return to our revival, which was sorely threatened by this Satanic trick. See next chapter.

## XXI

### *CHATTANOOGA REVIVAL CONTINUED*



JUST at this time, when the meeting was moving gloriously, the enemy rallied his forces to break us down. And if you read on, you will see how devilish and dangerous was the attack—dangerous because it had all the appearance of being innocent under the well-concealed design of evil, the old Satanic trick. Here is the case: Several judicious friends came to us (the preachers), saying that the meeting was being greatly crippled, and they feared for the results. Two lewd women of the town, had been coming, in the “after services,” for two or three nights, and had crowded into the seats designated for penitents, and by their coarse and immodest conduct had disturbed all about them. They, we were told, were notoriously vile, and it was believed that they were the cat’s-paw of some bad men of the town to disgrace the meeting by their brazen deviltry. Here was a serious trouble, and to

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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deal effectively with it a delicate matter—it might prove a boomerang. These women were sinners, no doubt of that, and we were telling the people that Jesus died for sinners and would save them if they would repent and accept Christ; and these two had, upon our general invitation, come to the seats for instruction and prayer. This was all regular and ostensibly very innocent and right. But there was evidently a “cat in the meal.” Their conduct did not comport with the character they assumed; they were not humble and contrite before God, but brazen and impudent. Our best women and men believed they were emissaries of Satan to disgrace our services and ruin the meeting if possible. Well, the foul thing was on our hands and must be dealt with, and the disagreeable task fell to me. We all knew that the moment we took hold to correct it the enemies would raise the cry of hypocrisy and say: “Yes, you have a salvation for the rich and well-dressed, but a poor, ruined woman you have nothing but a kick and a curse.” Deplorable as this issue would be, it must be met, or the meeting ruined. So that night before we called for mourners I

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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told the audience. just what we had heard, and deplored the necessity forced upon us to deal with such a delicate question. These women knew that they had made a great breach between themselves and good society, and that their brazen conduct was hurtful here. And then I said to them: "If you are really penitent, you will not force yourselves in here to the hurt of others, but will humbly go to our good women, who will gladly sympathize with you and instruct you and pray for you." We therefore begged them to take this better way; but assured them that if they persisted in disturbing the exercises as they had been doing we would be compelled to take further steps to correct the evil.

Well, they did not come that night; but two nights later they were right in the midst of perhaps fifty penitents, with their bold, insolent deportment, attracting attention, and in other ways creating confusion. The much dreaded crisis had come—a defiant challenge—and by the grace of God I determined to meet it, let come what might. So I worked my way in among the mourners and took the two women, who were side by side, each by the arm(maybe a little rudely, I don't know), and

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said: "Come with me." I brought them out into the aisle and took them to the last seat in the house and deposited them. A pretty high-handed move, you say. True, it was drastic treatment; but the case was acute, and required it. And, it worked like a charm—ended the trouble—while the religious sentiment of the public heartily approved the act, and God carried on his work gloriously. Amen. A word more here. Lest some young preacher, who has no more sense than I had then, may erroneously conclude that this is the right way to manage such a trouble, let me say: If such a thing should come up in a meeting of mine to-day, I would take a different course. I would try this: Get some good, sensible, pious women to take the case off my hands, and go in a body to the poor wretches, and talk and pray with them and beg them to a better course. In nine cases out of ten that will succeed.

We had not opened the church for members during the five weeks; our work was to get men saved. So when we closed, the announcement was made that each of our churches would be opened next Sunday and an opportunity given to join the church. This was



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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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done, and I had the pleasure of receiving forty-seven members, seven of them heads of families. Others came later. The other churches shared liberally in the increase of members. A most glorious revival; and, as is always the case, it settled all questions, reared family altars, boomed the Sunday-school, filled the church at every service with devout worshippers, and even made finances easy. *A revival is the king cure-all.*

Soon after the close of the meeting wife and I were requested to meet some friends at the home of Col. J. L. M. French, who lived right where the courthouse now stands. This we did, and found the object was, in the name of many friends, to present us a purse containing one hundred and eighty dollars. And good Tom Crutchfield almost embarrassed us by bringing the one hundred and twenty dollars which the stewards paid him quarterly for our board and giving it to my wife. I refused to take it. Yes I did; you need not shake your head! Conference was coming to Chattanooga that fall (1858), and we were ready for it.

And now I thought I could begin to see why the Lord had broken up our cherished plans

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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at Jonesboro, and thrust us out, painfully, from home and friends into a hard, unpromising field. It seemed all wrong and "for evil" to us then; but He meant it "for good." And so it turned out. This lesson I learned: That the appointment which demands the greatest amount of self-denial and hard work is often the best in the end. This is Methodist-preacher experience.

Among the other well remembered things that took place during the year was the completion of the railroad between Limestone and Bull's Gap. The East Tennessee and Georgia road going east and the Virginia and Tennessee going west met at Midway. The last spike was to be driven by the President, Dr. Cunningham, of Jonesboro, on a given day. It was to be a great day; everybody was to be there. The roads made liberal provisions for passengers. This gave a through line to Jonesboro. Mr. Blair, wife's father, who was one of the directors, wrote her to come up on that day and see her old Jonesboro friends and go on home with him. This she did, taking nurse and the baby, who was "getting a big boy then." A great day for her and home folks! This left me alone, but only a day or

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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two, for my old friend, Robert Cravens, mentioned elsewhere, who lived right under the bluff on the point of Lookout, came down and invited me up to spend the heated season with him. There was no other house on the mountain then. Of course, I went. We walked the near way, and, passing the mouth of Chattanooga Creek, which he owned and where he had a net set for fish, we stopped to get fish for dinner. He raised the net, in which there were perhaps a dozen good fish, and I began to grab for them. He said: "Hold on; get that salmon there; he will be enough for us to carry up the mountain." I managed to capture him, a fine fellow sixteen or eighteen inches long. Then he let the net down again. The fish kept better there than up at the house. I sometimes took my book and climbed up the bluff in the morning to read and make sermons. And you who know the place almost envy me the privilege. Well, it was delightful; but it was the poorest place I ever tried for reading or making sermons. Too many things to look at. That long sweep of river around "Moccasin Bend;" the numerous railroads, with their snaky looking trains running in and out around the foot of the mountain; the town huddled up

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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about the foot of Cameron Hill; the mountain stretching for many miles on all sides; the old Cumberland on the north and west, heaved like a troubled sea, stretching far away to the Kentucky line; on the south and east the Great Smokies piled up all the way back to the Blue Ridge, with its many spurs, with pretty Indian names, Chilhowie, Unaka, etc., and far in the distance big Nantahalalah, in North Carolina, lifting his crest of hemlocks, like Saul, a head and shoulders higher than the rest; just at your feet the noisy crows and lazy buzzard floating slowly as if smelling out some prey, and whipping right over your head a cruel hawk, "with his butcher's white apron stained with blood;" the landscape all around covered with farms, and from yonder cottage the blue smoke curling upward, which says, "Dinner is getting here for husband, who is plowing in that field over there;" and away off yonder a cloud carrying a ship's load of water to the farmer's fields—all this and a thousand other grand and beautiful things invite and feast your eyes, until you look down to the cottage, and Sister Cravens has hung the towel on the railing of the back porch. Dinner is ready, and nothing done on the bluff. But enough of this.

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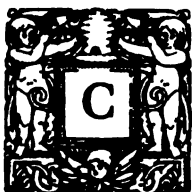
## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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Now, Mr. Editor, this is a long account of our year at Chattanooga. It reminds me of my boyhood. Mother used to give me a lump of sugar when I was a good boy, which sometimes happened. I could have taken it all at one mouthful, but I didn't. I would lick it a little while, and then put it in my pocket a bit, and then take it out and nibble some more; by repeating this process a half dozen times I made it last longer, because it was sweet and I liked the taste of it. And so our good Heavenly Father gave us this delightful year, and I love to linger on the recollections of it; they are a joy forever. And more: that revival in the three churches had much to do in laying the foundation of the greater Chattanooga of to-day. But a sad thought comes up here. Nearly all who took part in that meeting are gone; some of their children and grandchildren are still there. My two associates, Brothers Bradshaw and Templeton, have been in heaven many years. I do not know that Bradshaw had any children; but Templeton had some little boys, one of whom at least remains—Hon. Jerome Templeton, of Knoxville, a worthy son of a noble sire. God bless him!

## XXII

*YEAR 1858-59*



CONFERENCE met this year (1858) at Chattanooga. Bishop Andrew presided and J. N. S. Huffaker was secretary. I was Conference host, and do not recollect much about the session save that I was very busy looking after outside matters pertaining to the comfort of the preachers and their wives. Our appointment was to Knoxville. I did not say Church Street; that was not necessary, as we had no other church in the town, except a little mission over about old Methodist Hill. We spent only a part of the year here; for Martha Washington College wanted an agent to raise money for her, and wanted the Knoxville preacher to do that work. E. C. Wexler was stationed at Abingdon that year. The friends of the college got the presiding elders to exchange the preachers, as they thought I would make a better agent than Wexler. And so it was done. I did some work as agent, raised

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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a few hundred dollars, and preached some in the station. The year's work was so broken up that not much was done at Abingdon. But Knoxville did well. Wexler, who was my Conference classmate, was one of the best men and the very best preacher of his age and opportunities that I have ever heard. Physically he was a rough Dutchman, with a rather robust body which had been developed in his father's blacksmith shop in Sullivan County. He had large hands and feet, which seemed to be in his way, and a large head and heart, both baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire. He was a systematic, close student, much given to prayer. A text became luminous as he opened it up and held it before the audience. He was very modest and even timid, which made him awkward often, especially in the society of ladies; but after his first five minutes in the pulpit he was absolutely graceful, and soon glowed like a furnace. Altogether he was more like Bishop Kavanaugh than any other preacher I have known. Dear fellow! When the war drove us out of Tennessee, he drifted south into Georgia and I east into Virginia. I never met him again, but I hope to later.

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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In 1859 the Conference met at Abingdon, Bishop Early in the chair and J. N. S. Huffaker, secretary. Our second son was born just before this Conference, and wife "went not up; for she said unto her husband, I will not go up until the child be weaned, and then I will bring him." This year fell two of our brethren, Thomas Stringfield and Charles Mitchell. Brother Mitchell had been with us only seven years; but Mr. Stringfield belonged to our Methodist history before the organization of the Holston Conference, in 1824. He belonged to the pioneer days, and while we were yet a part of the Western Conference (1823) he was the presiding elder of the Knoxville district. He was the editor of our first Methodist paper, and the promoter of many enterprises for the betterment of the social and religious life of the people. He "commanded his household after him," so that for seventy-five years his children and grandchildren have been prominent in all that builds and betters human life.

From this Conference we were returned to Knoxville. Here we had a delightful year. The old church stood where our present commodious house now stands. It was old-



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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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style in architecture, with a gallery in the back end. Here a few leading singers sat, and George Jackson led them, sometimes using his flute to get the proper pitch. Here was a fine type of substantial Methodists, the ancestors and exemplars of the present beloved Church Street congregation. Brethren of old Church Street, your fathers were a little more religiously demonstrative than you are. I commend you not for the difference, the loss of that feature of family likeness.

Among this people were three local preachers, all of whom had been traveling preachers in the Holston Conference—Isaac Lewis, W. G. Brownlow, and C. W. Charlton. Isaac Lewis was feeble from age, but still full of the sweet spirit of the Master and a wise, ready counselor for a young man. Some of his children and grandchildren are still there. William G. Brownlow was the editor of *Brownlow's Whig*, wide-awake, a great reader of current literature, familiar with the live topics of the day, a Whig in politics, neutral in nothing, a positive man with well-defined ideas, a ready speaker and popular preacher. His widow, well up in years—about ninety, I guess—is still living in the city and in the old

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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home. She is perhaps the only living member who was old enough to take an active part in church work then—a much-honored relic of the sunny days of the fifties. May the peace of God that passes all understanding keep the mind and heart of this dear child of His, through Jesus Christ our Lord. C. W. Charlton was much the younger of the three, strong and fearless, always thoughtful, a good preacher and one of the best friends a pastor ever had.

We had some very gracious meetings during the year, but the most memorable occasion was the camp meeting at old Fountain Head (now Fountain City). This meeting was largely supported and carried on by my people from Knoxville. Here we rallied with some of our country neighbors, and had a glorious season of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. The shed stood inside of the present inclosure, about half way from the car platform to the spring at the foot of the hill; the tents occupied the level plat around the shed. Here for many years the people from the town and country around were accustomed annually to gather for their religious feast. How delightful and profitable with all were

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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those weeks of religious and social enjoyment! This was in the fall of 1859, and was the last camp meeting held there; and of those present then many never attended another. The war came, and our camp meetings went with the loss of well nigh all else of material good. As I try to recall the scenes and occurrences of that year in Knoxville, my heart grows sad; for the dear men and women who constituted my congregation, only one or two remain. Of the young men just grown up then, I meet some on the streets, gray-haired; among them are William A. Henderson, John B. Boyd, William Rule, N. S. Woodward, the elder Parham, etc. Of the boys, there are S. B. and J. C. Luttrell, John Brownlow, Sam. Boyd, Sam. Crawford, C. B. Atkins, Leon Jeroulman, James and William Lyons, Henry Ault, and some others, no doubt, not recalled at this writing after the lapse of fifty years. I write only of those who were connected with my Sunday-school and congregation. What a host of well-remembered faces have passed before me as I have written these recollections and have gone up and down the streets as they were then! Knoxville then was on Main and Cumberland Streets. The East Ten-

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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nessee, Virginia, and Georgia Railroad had a little shack of a depot out at the end of Gay. All north Knoxville was good hunting ground for birds and rabbits. I know, for I tried it.

In 1860 the Conference met at Asheville, N. C. Two of our Holston districts were in North Carolina then. Bishop Paine presided, and I was secretary—a business to which I was little suited and for which I had no taste. I had been stationed there nine years before, in the second year of my ministry. How the town had grown in those years! Wife and I had a home with my old friend, Ed Aston, and his good wife, Delia Gilliland. I met Ed some ten years before this as I was on my way, a schoolboy, to Emory and Henry College. I did not travel on Sunday, and stopped off at Rogersville, Tenn., his home, to spend the day. I went to the Methodist Sunday-school; and Ed, seeing a stranger present, came and ferreted me out and asked me to dinner with him. His sister, Mary, presented me a laundry pincushion with a nice little note, which I still have here in a drawer of souvenirs. She afterwards became the wife of our Daniel Carter, of Holston for many years.

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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Well, big-souled Ed Aston was long a controlling factor in affairs of the growing city, and his wife was a jewel worthy to grace the crown of any king. After an absence of eight years, I still found many familiar faces and had many a hearty handshake. The Woodfins, the Rankins, the Reynoldses, the McDowells, the Smiths, the Beards, the Atkinses, the Hilliards, the Sluders, the Robertses, the Johnsons, and the Vances were still here. It was a delightful sojourn among old friends, never to be forgotten.

Our appointment from this Conference was to the Blountville Circuit. This gave us a pleasing variety and a fine field for work. Here we had a parsonage and for the first time tried our hand at housekeeping. What a satisfaction it was to have our own things, arrange them as we liked, to cook what we wanted and as we wanted it and when! I shall never forget the first time we tried to make light bread. I brought all the chemistry I knew to the work, and wife what she had learned from Aunt Tildy, the cook at home; and we made the bread. Well, we ate it; but to be frank about it, I had eaten better bread. However, wife never gave it up till she could

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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beat the best Virginia cook making light bread. Mr. James H. Dosser, a friend from Jonesboro, gave me a good horse, saddle, and bridle, which he said I could have for the horse's keep. This set me up for circuit riding. All moved well for a while, but if you will look at the date you will see that we were in the fall of 1860 and spring of 1861. By far the greater part of those who may care to read these recollections have no personal knowledge of the stirring times we were in. But, stirring times they were. The dark cloud of war which had been gathering for a quarter of a century now filled all the horizon; and its thunder, which jarred the nation for five dreadful years, could be heard muttering at no great distance. I am writing recollections, and shall say nothing here of the long line of political and social conditions which led up to the painful necessity on the part of the Southern people to either forfeit their own self-respect and the respect of all true men, or go to war. Those political and social questions are dead, and so let the dead bury the dead.

War recollections next.

## XXIII

### *DAYS OF SECESSION*



**W**HEN the state voted on secession, I did not vote; but when the majority elected to go out of the Union, I accepted the situation and went with them. There were many strong, good men in East Tennessee who opposed secession and did what they could to prevent it by canvassing the State. Sullivan County, which included the Blountville Circuit, was for secession by a large majority, and at the first call of the State began to enlist volunteers. These State troops were later transferred to the Confederacy. Fort Sumter fell about this time. The fight was on, and Southern blood was getting hot. Messrs. Andrew Johnson and T. A. R. Nelson, men of national reputation and very popular—one an old Whig and the other a Democrat—were canvassing the State for “neutrality”—*i. e.*, for Tennessee to take no part in the strife. They had an appointment to speak at Blountville on a certain

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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day. The citizens of the town and country around did not want them to come; so they called a citizens' meeting in the courthouse two days before the speaking was to be, and decided to write the gentlemen not to come, fearing trouble might grow out of it. This was done, and the letter was sent to Union (Bluff City), supposing the speakers would come by rail from Jonesboro and get it. Early on the morning of the day for the speaking men began to come in from all around, some with squirrel guns and some with shot guns and a good deal of whisky. It was a crowd that promised trouble. By about nine it was reported that the speakers were not coming by Union, but directly through from Jonesboro by private conveyance, and would not, therefore, get the letter. Here I became connected with the affair. It was apparent that there would be trouble, if the men came on to speak, and that our town would be perhaps disgraced and the speakers, who were my friends, probably abused. All this must be prevented if possible. So I went to Mr. Samuel Rhea, who had been the chairman of the town meeting, and told him my fears. He was with me, and said: "How can we



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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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prevent it?" I asked: "Have you a copy of the letter sent?" "Yes," he replied. Then said I: "Get a copy of it ready while I get my horse, and I will meet the gentlemen with it." And so it was done. The crowd saw me start and knew for what I went, and some of them were impatient with me for going. I met the men some two miles out from the town, both in the same buggy. They read the letter and after a moment said, "We do not want to speak if the people do not want us to," and then added, "But if a majority want us to speak, we think we ought to be allowed to do so without interruption. Can you guarantee that?" I then told them frankly just how I became connected with the unpleasant affair and of the state of public feeling in town and why I had come to meet them. Mr. Nelson's son, David, and son-in-law, Mr. Samuel Cunningham, both young friends of mine, were with them. After a few words of consultation they said: "Take the boys and go on before us and get the wishes of the people and bring us word. We will stop at Sturn's Hotel, at this end of the town; and if the people do not want us to speak, we will go on to Kingsport." The young men and I hurried on;

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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and from the steps of the courthouse I told the crowd, which came running, what the gentlemen said. We took the vote, and only four wanted them to speak. We reported, and the speakers went on to Kingsport. Now, if this matter had ended there, it never would have been written here. But when the war closed, five years after this, and the days of reconstruction came, I was a refugee in Virginia. But I was indicted in the court at Blountville for treason, for heading a mob who kept Andrew Johnson and Thomas Nelson from speaking—the day and date given. And I was kept out of my native State for two years before the hateful thing was dropped from the docket. This is a part of an old man's recollections hard to forget. It shows the condition of society in East Tennessee in those days of reconstruction, so-called—days of relentless hate and bitter cruelty and revenge and robbery, rapine and murder. There were many good men who were Union men in the country, but they were almost powerless to prevent this state of things. They might have done a little better than they did, maybe, if they had tried hard. But let it be written as history that it was not

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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the men who wore the blue and the gray and stood on the firing line in the day of battle who did those dastardly things. No; it was whelps from another kennel, who cowardly came out after the killing was over, with the instincts of a hyena to get what they could out of the offal. I will not particularize the numerous fiendish acts that characterized and disgraced the times. Let them go unnamed and be forgotten.

I must mention an incident that made us all smile when it was related to us. Aunt Betsey Charlton, a dear, good old soul, came to town the morning for the speaking, and was at the parsonage. She was much troubled over the situation, fearing somebody might do wrong or get hurt and mischief befall us all. So she watched the streets; and when the young men and I came into town and went upon the courthouse steps and all the crowd came running, she was greatly excited. She kept her eyes upon us, but could not hear what we said. In taking the vote of the people I requested all to squat down and vote by rising. Well, when Aunt Betsey saw them all get down in the street she almost shouted, saying: "It is all right now; Brother Sullins has got

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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them all down at prayers." Prayer was Aunt Betsey's cure for everything.

After the fall of Fort Sumter the enlisting of volunteers went on more lively. I kept up my appointments, and the enthusiastic enlisters would sometimes make their appointments to meet the people at the same time. After preaching they would invite all out into the churchyard, make brief talks, sing patriotic songs, beat an old drum used at the militia musters years before, and call for volunteers. I heard "Dixie" now for the first time. Of course, I caught the spirit and helped to rally. Soon two companies were enrolled and organized. Of one A. L. Gammon was captain and James A. Rhea, Robert L. Blair, and James Charlton, lieutenants. Of the other, James P. Snapp was captain; and Charles St. John, George Hull, and John M. Jones, lieutenants. These companies were soon called to Knoxville. And now came the trying time. I was asked to go along and preach for and look after the boys. My stewards said they would get the local preachers to take care of the circuit; and wife, having a brother and many friends going, said she would stay with her father if I wanted to go. In fact,

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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she was about the worst rebel among us, and never got over it entirely. The companies marched out of town about noon, wife and I, with the two little boys, following in a buggy. Many friends accompanied us a few miles, then said good-bye and went back. O, the heartache, the tears, the anxiety and prayers of that hour! and how all this would have been intensified many times could we have known the fact, as it turned out, that many of us would never come back! That hour will always be a part of an old man's recollections. We spent that night in Bluff City (Union then). Having no tents, we slept about in the houses and at the depot. Of course our lunch baskets were well filled by loved ones left behind; we had plenty to eat. Next morning all took train for Knoxville. Wife and I stopped with her parents at Jonesboro. Here I remained a few days, and then went on to Knoxville to join the boys. I found them out on the old Fair Grounds, east of the city, with eight other companies, ready to be organized into a regiment. These companies were all from East Tennessee—two from Sullivan County, two from Hamilton, one from Knox, one from Rhea, one from Wash-

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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ington, one from Polk, one from Hawkins, one from McMinn. The regiment was organized in a few days and numbered Nineteenth Tennessee. The following were the officers elected: David H. Cummings, colonel; Frank M. Walker, lieutenant-colonel; Abe Fulkerson, major; V. Q. Johnson, adjutant; H. Mell Doak, sergeant-major; Dr. Joe E. Dulany, surgeon; A. D. Taylor, quartermaster; and Rev. D. Sullins, chaplain. The number, all told, in the regiment was one thousand and sixty. Now we began camp-life in earnest. The companies were formed into messes of from four to six. Each mess had one tent, tin plates, cups, and cooking utensils; each man had a blanket, canteen, knapsack and haversack.

## XXIV

### *NINETEENTH TENNESSEE REGIMENT*



IN the last chapter I was perhaps tiresome in giving so minutely the organization and outfit of the regiment; but I thought that young readers might be interested in knowing how their fathers and grandfathers went to war. The regiment organized, the business now was to drill day in and day out. It was now the middle of June, and the authorities thought there ought to be some soldiers at Cumberland Gap to hold that point and keep an eye on Kentucky and see what was going on over there. Soon two companies, one from Chattanooga and the other from Knoxville, were ordered to the Gap under the command of their captains, Powell and Paxton. I went with them, as there were plenty of preachers at Knoxville, and none at the Gap. We went by rail to Morristown, and by the old historic pioneer road to Bean's Station, where Bishop Asbury used to meet his guards and pilots from

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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Kentucky to accompany him over the Clinch and through the Gap into the "dark and bloody ground." At the station the boys had quite an ovation, The neighbors had prepared a barbecue, and gave them a hearty reception. Of course the boys gave them specimens of their soldierly marching, while our little band gave them music. We spent the night at the big sulphur spring at the foot of the Clinch. Next day we went on to the Gap. The boys stopped at the spring at the foot; but I rode on into the Gap, the first soldier there. Now we were put under strict military regulations. My tent was near the summit, where the pickets were stationed. Many a sleepless night I listened to the slow tread of the sentinel as he walked his beat, and heard him call, "Post Number One, twelve o'clock, all's well." Here we began soldier life in earnest. The boys had to go down to the level ground on the Tennessee side to drill.

Soon after we left Knoxville, the other companies belonging to the regiment were sent, some to guard the bridge at Loudon, others to Jamestown, and four to Big Creek Gap (Lafollette). It was not long before all



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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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these companies were ordered to join us at the Gap. Now we had preaching every Sunday morning, Sunday-school in the afternoon, and prayer meeting at night. The restless boys soon had a Confederate flag flying from the highest point on the Virginia side. Something stirring was occurring almost daily now—the coming in of other regiments from Tennessee and Mississippi and Rutledge's Artillery and McClung's Battery and others. I remember the first capture our cavalry made. Union men from Tennessee were constantly trying to cross the mountain into Kentucky. A little squad of cavalry brought into camp one day some fifteen or twenty of these Union men, and among them Mr. T. A. R. Nelson, mentioned elsewhere, all trying to cross the mountain. Mr. Nelson was our neighbor at Jonesboro; so I went to the commander and asked the privilege of having him as my guest. This was readily granted. And then I remembered that his son, Sandy, was a member of our regiment; so I invited Sandy to spend the day and take dinner with his father in the tent. I was pleased to see that there was no reserve or embarrassment when they met. Sandy was very

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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respectful, and Mr. Nelson very fatherly. We talked of home and old friends there with great frankness. Mr. Nelson was a strong, honest, high-toned gentleman, and a superior lawyer. It may be remembered that he was called to Washington to defend President Johnson in his impeachment trial. I am sure he had nothing to do with indictment against me for treason, mentioned elsewhere. I was glad to have the opportunity to entertain him at a plain soldier's dinner.

The other prisoners were put in the guard-house, a rough log house with straw all over the dirt floor. I went to see them. Of course they were a little shy at first; but when I told them who I was and that I had come to serve them in any way I could, they were more free and frank. After talking a little, I suggested that as it was uncertain when they might get home, I would gladly write home for any of them if they wished me to do so. This interested them, and we all sat down in the straw, they close about me, and I wrote as they dictated letters to several of their wives and friends. These letters I mailed at once. I wish now that I had kept a list of their names, for I might find some member

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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of some families who would have knowledge of the fact. I was glad to serve them. They were plain countrymen, and no doubt believed they were doing right. They were sent to Knoxville and I never knew what became of them. Mr. Nelson got through our lines later, and went to Washington.

General Zollicoffer came and took command, and on the next day moved the little army of about six thousand out into Kentucky, to the ford of the Cumberland River, some twenty miles distant. Soon the report came that Federals were establishing a camp at Barboursville, and Zollicoffer sent out a detachment under Colonel Battles to break it up. The enemy was found in a cornfield near the town. Company K, from Rogersville, was thrown out as a skirmish line and engaged them. It was a mere skirmish, but made memorable by the fact that here we lost the first man out of the regiment, Robert Powell, first lieutenant of his company. He was our first soldier killed in battle. We sent his remains home—a sad business!

The next little expedition was to Goose Creek Salt Works. Our Nineteenth Regiment, accompanied by Colonel Carter's

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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Cavalry, was sent with wagons for salt. I did not go. The boys reported a rough, hard trip of forty miles right through the mountains, with no fighting. They brought back some two hundred bushels of salt, after five days' absence.

Next we had a little spat with General Schoeff, at Wild Cat, or Rock Castle, which amounted to nothing but a drill in warlike movements for the boys. We returned to the camp at the ford of the Cumberland, and that night there was a sad accident. General A. E. Jackson was quartermaster; but, being absent, his son, Alfred, had charge. Just after we had all gone to bed a pistol shot was heard, and soon one of the boys came to my tent and said: "Alfred Jackson has accidentally shot himself, and is dead in his tent." Here was trouble. "What shall we do with his remains?" was the question. General Jackson, the father of the deceased, was our near neighbor and close friend at Jonesboro. So I said: "I must take him home to his mother. Prepare the body as well as you can, and be ready as soon as possible to start; I will get my horse and follow the wagon." This was done, and we started

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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about eleven o'clock, I guess. My horse followed close along behind the wagon. The road, like all mountain roads, was full of rocks; the night was dark, so dark that at times in the deep gorges through which we passed I could not see my horse's head. Both horse and rider were tired; we had been at it all day. I was exhausted, sometimes nodding as I rode along, and would have nodded more, I expect, if we had not been in a bush-whacking country, which fact served to keep me awake in a measure. I thought the wagon made a great deal of noise, and might wake up some folks we did not want disturbed. We pulled into Cumberland just after daylight. I was glad to see the day and get on the Tennessee side of the mountain again. That night trip will always be a part of an old man's recollections of the war. We plodded on, and sometime up in the day stopped at the foot of Clinch for something to eat—call it breakfast. Then we toiled on to Morristown, much in the night. Here I left my horse, the wagon went back, and I took a train with the corpse, for Jonesboro, where his broken hearted mother and sisters met us. Of course, his mother wanted to

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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look on the dear face of her soldier boy. But after a good deal of pleading, I got her consent for me to open the box, and, if I thought best, either let her see it or close it up. We had hauled the body in a wagon over rough roads for nearly seventy miles, and I did not think it could be in condition for her to see it. And so I found it, and she allowed us to put him away without seeing him. There on the high eastern hill, with his ancestors, we laid him to rest. Alfred Jackson, the deceased, was the father of our Brother Alfred N. Jackson, the presiding elder of the Radford district, and a "soldier of the cross."

The command was called out of Kentucky in a few days, and I joined it at Big Creek Gap. This was now in November, and there was snow all along the Cumberland. We blockaded the gap, and moved on to Jacksboro. Here I called on General Jackson, the quartermaster, and found him overworked and very nervous. The death of his son was a great shock to him. An order had been issued to buy horses for the army, and a great many were in the yard for sale. After a little talk, the General asked me to come and help him.

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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I agreed to do so, and went out and bought several horses, and took charge of much of the outside business of the office. Soon we moved down to Ross, near Clinton. Sunday morning found us camped at the foot of the mountain. I found a big rock, and used it as a pulpit. The boys around took part heartily in the services. We had a good day, well remembered. Generals Zollicoffer and Jackson went on to Knoxville, while we rested here. Two days later General Zollicoffer returned, and issued orders to "Capt. D. Sullins" to move the army by Oliver Springs to Wartburg and on to Montgomery. I smiled when I got the order to "Capt. D. Sullins;" it was evident that the General did not know some things. However, we put things in motion, while I looked hourly for the coming of General Jackson. But as he did not come, I did the best I could.

We camped at Wartburg, where the boys got a sort of sour Dutch wine, which tasted like stump water with vinegar in it. Some of the boys got drunk on it. Soon after we left Wartburg we started up Cumberland Mountain; and as General Jackson had not yet come, I decided to have a conference with

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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General Zollicoffer, who had gone on before us. I pushed on and overtook him at the old Indian Tavern. I had not met him before; but as soon as I gave him my name, he seemed to know me, and was very cordial, and began to inquire how the wagons were getting up the mountain. When I asked him about General Jackson, he said: "Jackson is in Knoxville, and will not be with us any more; he is post quartermaster there." I expressed surprise at this, and said: "What are we to do? We have no quartermaster." He replied: "You are quartermaster, and Jackson said you could do the work as well as he." Then I began to talk. "General, I am a Methodist preacher, and chaplain of the Nineteenth Tennessee Regiment. Jackson is my neighbor at Jonesboro; and finding him overworked and very nervous at Jonesboro, I agreed to help him. That is how I became connected with this office. I am willing to do all I can; but from our movements the last two days, I take it we are going to Kentucky, and we have no money to pay for supplies." To this he replied with earnestness: "Make a requisition and send to Knoxville for money." "But, General, I



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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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am not an officer, and my requisition would not be accepted." He said: "I will make the requisition. Fill me up a blank, and I will send a messenger at once." This was done and we went on. The money reached us the day we passed Monticello, Ky. Soon we reached Mill Springs, on the Cumberland River, where we built some shacks and went into winter quarters. Christmas was near, and I wanted to spend it with my family, as my wife was in delicate health. When I asked for a permit to go home, the General said: "Wait till we see what the enemy is going to do over about Somerset." The next day, perhaps, he sent for me, and said: "Will you allow me to apply for a commission for you as quartermaster, with rank of major?" I requested a day to think about it and consult my regiment. As I left him, he said: "If you will, I will give you a permit to go home until your commission comes." That about settled the question. Next day I started home. I found wife with a babe, born on Christmas day, a little girl, whom, after the death of Zollicoffer, January 19, we called "Zollie." That child is now the

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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wife of Rev. G. R. Stuart. She has been making up my bed, pouring out my coffee, and sleeping in the next room since the death of her mother, six years ago.

## XXV

### COMMISSIONED QUARTER- MASTER



MUST conclude that to continue to write so much history of the war will only tire and not interest readers. I shall hereafter try to select such experiences as I think may be most likely to entertain and help the young people who may read these recollections.

In the last chapter we had just touched the disastrous battle of Fishing Creek, or Mill Springs, as it is sometimes called. I was home at the time of this fight (see Chapter XXIV.), and therefore had no recollection of it. But the boys told me when I got back that it was a fearful time. Many of their guns were old flintlocks, and the rain poured down so they could not fire at all. Several of them, after trying repeatedly to fire, just broke their guns over a fence or around a tree, and went off in disgust. The government had no guns to give them, only as they captured them from the enemy. This fact and the loss

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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of General Zollicoffer, who rode into the enemy's lines, supposing they were friends, in the dense fog, account in a good measure for the defeat and loss we sustained. Here our boys suffered the loss of everything, so that for days they were without shelter, bed, or food, and in midwinter. I joined them at Carthage, where they told me many a sad story of the fateful day. General Crittendon was in command. When I called to see him, he was in bed, unfit for business; but gave me my commission, which had come while I was away. Colonel Cummings and Captain Gammon went with me to the town, where they signed my bond; and so I became quartermaster for the brigade. Captain J. F. J. Lewis was my assistant, and Lieut. Duff Lewis, bookkeeper. We now had to equip the command; but we were close to Nashville, and soon had an outfit. The disaster at Fishing Creek and the fall of Fort Donelson and the evacuation of Bowling Green, Ky., all coming so close together, made things look blue. Soon we moved from Carthage to Lebanon, and on to Murfreesboro. Here General A. S. Johnston, with his Kentucky troops and such as escaped from Fort Donel-

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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son, met us. And here the army was organized into three divisions under Hardee, Crittenden, and Pillow. Among the pleasing things that occurred here was the coming into camp of Billy Vestal, who was left at Monticello, Ky., as was thought, mortally wounded. He was captured, but slipped away from the hospital and made his way to us. Nashville was threatened now, and we had large supplies there of all kinds. So I went to headquarters, and asked the privilege of sending ten wagons there for such things as we needed. This was granted, somewhat reluctantly, fearing that the train might be captured. The wagons went and a few soldiers with them. I gave them orders to go immediately to the supply depot and load up on what they thought would be most useful to us. This they did, and brought ten good loads of all kinds of supplies, which I turned over to the captains of the Nineteenth Tennessee to divide among their needy men. They reported all distributed, except a bale of heavy duck cloth, which they could not use. This they threw into my wagon. The organization completed, we were ready to

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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move farther south. The following order was issued:

Headquarters, Western Department, Murfreesboro, Tenn., February 28, 1862.—The column will resume the march to-morrow morning, and continue from day to day, by Shelbyville, Fayetteville, to Decatur, Ala. The march so arranged to make fifteen miles a day, so long as the roads permit.

W. W. McCALL, *Asst. Adj. Gen.*

By order of General Johnston.

That order concerned everybody, but especially the quartermasters, brigade and regimental, whose business it was to attend to the transportation of everything, as well as locate the several camps from day to day. The march was made without trouble, save that it rained much of the time, and wagons were constantly breaking down, etc.

The night before we got to Athens, Ala., we had a storm which blew down the tents. The occasion is made especially memorable by the fact that I was ordered to issue whisky to the men. We had two barrels of whisky in our wagons. This I respectfully declined to do, on the grounds that it was not the duty of the quartermaster to issue rations, and because I was opposed to the whisky ration anyway. My commander recognized the correctness of my position; but ordered me to

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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turn the whisky over to the commissary. This I did gladly. It was issued. That night a number of Irish belonging to the battery got more whisky than their share, as some of the boys would not drink it, but turned it over to the Irishmen, several of whom got drunk and gave trouble. Next morning the battery horses could not be found, having gotten loose in the night and wandered off. It was perhaps ten o'clock before we got started. All that day we had trouble—roads bad, drivers mad, etc. I made a point against whisky with my commander and we had no more whisky issued in our brigade.

At Decatur we had to cross the Tennessee River, wagons and teams. This we did by means of the railroad bridge on the cars—an all-day and an all-night job, the rain pouring down all the while. Our wagon train stopped at a cut a half-mile this side of the river, and flat cars were run into the cut, on which the men loaded the wagons and mules. I stood on the ground all night, and gave encouragement to the workers. About daylight we put the last wagon and mule on and mounted the cars. This was one of the hard

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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nights of the war for me. My stay at Decatur was made pleasant by having some kinsfolk there who gave me a hearty welcome, a good bed, and plenty to eat.

After a few days we moved on to Iuka and Burnsville, Miss. Here I got a permit to go home for ten days. I got back just in time for the great battle of Shiloh. And here are recollections to fill a volume; but only a few things concerning the fight, such as can never get into history, will be written. Some things in that fight of days became pictures on memory's page never to be forgotten; time seems to have little or no effect upon them. The awful roar and thunder of eighty thousand guns in the heat of battle can be but dimly recalled, and is by no means so vividly stamped on the mind as the dead men here and there and the long line of wounded and dying men on the way to the surgeon's station; the trickling blood from the improvised stretcher; the white, upturned face still streaked with powder; the faint call, "Water;" the quick breath and far-away look; the effort to tell you something, broken off for want of strength to finish (you could hear "mother"); the amputated legs and arms laid in a tangled



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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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heap at the root of the tree—these and such like are never forgotten. O, how I have wished I could forget! I still shut my eyes sometimes in an effort to shut it all out—but in vain; it is all there still.

Captain Lewis had charge of the ammunition and ambulance train during this fight. This was a very responsible position, for much depended on the watchful care and courage of this officer. No driver was allowed to go faster than a walk; otherwise he might excite apprehension or create a panic—a thing much more easily done, even among brave men, than is supposed. In the afternoon of the first day's fight Gen. A. S. Johnston was fatally wounded, and fell near our train. Captain Lewis furnished the ambulance that took the great soldier off the field. A sad service! This death, perhaps, saved the Federals from a total defeat. After the fall of Johnston, Gen. Beauregard, who was off the field and sick, took charge; but before he could get the situation in hand it was night. That night Buell came to Grant's relief with some twenty-five thousand fresh troops. These were posted during the night, and next morning our tired boys met them, but were not able to drive them farther back.

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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At about two o'clock the firing almost ceased, and as if by mutual consent the armies rested. The fight was over; but we occupied the field, and remained there for several days. That evening, after the fight, it was rumored that the Federals with their fresh troops were moving to attack us. A strong picket line was stationed between the two armies. I walked out to the line, and it extended both ways as far as I could see along the hill. The men were sitting down on the ground, with their guns between their knees, facing toward the enemy. How long they stayed there, I do not know; but this I remember well: I stood all that rainy night in a grove of trees, my horse saddled and the bridle rein in my hand. The night was very dark, so dark that I could not see; but occasionally I could hear my horse breathing like one asleep. A good many of the boys slept at the roots of the trees all around me. No enemy came. And as soon as it was light we hustled about for something to eat. We had plenty, for we had captured a pile of bacon as big as a courthouse and hundreds of barrels of sugar and crackers. This we used at liberty. If I got hungry, I would

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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sometimes go and get a handful of crackers and sugar and a nice piece of fat meat, then scrape some of the fat and mix it with sugar and spread it like butter on my crackers. Quit your laughing; it was good eating! "Hunger is better than a French cook." More anon.

## XXVI

### *STILL AT SHILOH*



TILL on the battlefield of Shiloh! Among the most memorable events of that fearful battle was a charge made by the Nineteenth Tennessee—my own East Tennessee regiment, and boys whom I had helped to enlist, and for whom I preached and prayed. It was in the afternoon of the first day's fighting. I wrote out a description of it years ago, and hope the reader will not be the less interested if I simply copy it here: "Kentucky's great warrior chief, Albert Sidney Johnston, had just fallen and had been carried from the field. From early morning we had forced the enemy back from hill to hill until our right almost touched the river. Gen. Breckinridge, with whom I pitched my tent for weary months, sat upon his horse on the crest of a long ridge, his staff about him, and his command lying just back of the top of the ridge, ready for orders. He was in command of the reserve corps for that day, composed mostly of Tennessee and Kentucky reg-

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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iments. Col. Frank Walker, a noble East Tennessean of Chattanooga, commander of the Nineteenth Tennessee, was at the head of his regiment and in speaking distance of the General. During the delay caused by the death of Gen. Johnston, a strong and well-supported battery had been planted by the Federals on a ridge in our front, and was raining death among us. The Crescent Regiment from New Orleans had been ordered to dislodge them. And the brave fellows had charged down the hill, over timber and through underbrush and woods, yelling and firing as they went, though shot and shell were plowing long furrows through their ranks. But still on they pressed. They had passed the hollow, and were just beginning the difficult ascent on the other side. All hearts were aching and prayers were going up. And then the blue eyes of Breckinridge were filled with tears, as through a rift in the smoke he saw the line on the face of the hill begin to waver a little and then fall back. It was a fearful moment. Death was shrieking in a thousand shells all about us, and solid shots were tearing the limbs from the trees overhead. Something must be done, and quickly. Those deadly guns must be silenced,

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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and those brave men supported. Among others of the Reserve Corps, the Nineteenth Tennessee Regiment was just back of the hilltop, waiting for orders. Breckinridge turned to his staff, and said: 'Gentlemen, is there a regiment here that can go to the relief of those men and silence that battery?' Col. Walker, modest as a woman, pure as he was modest, and brave as he was pure, spurred his horse forward and, touching his hat, said: 'General, I think the Nineteenth Tennessee can.' 'Give them the order, Colonel!' came the quick reply. It was done, and a thousand East Tennesseans sprang to their feet and swept down the hill like an unbridled cyclone, screaming the 'Rebel yell' and firing as they went. Down the hill they go, through the brush, and over the fallen timber. Yonder they go! I see them as shoulder to shoulder they move—my own regiment, for whom I preach. See the brave fellows! God protect them now! Save them in this fearful moment! And still they go on and on. They have passed the hollow, and are making the ascent, their lines unbroken still; but the dead and wounded almost cover the ground behind them. Mothers of Tennessee, I am

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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glad you did not see it. But look! look! the smoke from the battery is clearing; those horrid guns have ceased their work of death. See, they fly! they fly! There upon the summit our dear boys rally and shout, and we answer back from our hill in thundering tones till the young April leaves quiver. It was done; but it cost patriotic blood then and tears and sorrow ever since. Brave fellows! History will write you heroes; if not now, other men in other times will."

Next morning after the battle, April 8, 1862, came the sorrowful work of burying the dead, caring for the wounded, and hunting up the missing. This duty was assigned mainly to our Reserve Corps—a duty full of heartaches and tears. Roll call after a battle is a sad time. When the boys lined up, it was apparent that many were not present; their thinned ranks told too plainly how they had faced death in two days of bloody strife. As the roll was called about one man in every eight, on the average, would fail to answer. And then an inquiry about him would be answered by his messmate, telling where he fell, and whether wounded and carried to the hospital or killed outright by a fatal shot;

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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and if so, where on the field his body could be found. And so one after another was called. Every now and then you would see a comrade wipe his eyes with his rough coat sleeve as he told the story of his friend's fall. Among them was Capt. Zeb Willette; but no answer. Some one said: "Killed in a charge at the head of his company; his body is here in a box ready to be sent home." And I felt a great thud at my heart as I thought of his beautiful young wife, Rettie Lyle, my dear old pupil up in the hills by Jonesboro, Tenn. We sent him home with his boots on; we could do no better. No braver soldier ever gave his life to the Confederacy than Zeb Willette. Then they called Capt. T. H. Walker, "Company I," from Chattanooga, and the answer came: "Mortally wounded and dead on the field." This true soldier I had met first as a boy during my pastorate there four years before. And I said: "Dear Tom, rest in peace." Sergt. Sam Vance and John Easterly, who had enlisted from my circuit, and Isaac Roberts and Dan Lyons and George A. Cooper and John O'Conner and Charles York—in all eight from my circuit. And I said: "The war has reached old Sullivan



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now." I had helped to enlist them all and knew their homes and loved ones. No chaplain ever had a sadder part than I. For these troops of the Nineteenth Tennessee were enlisted in the East Tennessee portion of the Holston Conference, and I had been a pastor in nearly every town from which they came—Chattanooga, Athens, Knoxville, Jonesboro, Blountville, Bristol, etc. I had enjoyed the Christian hospitality of many of their homes, and knew their families. And when the name of one was called and no response, I thought of some loved one, father or mother, brother, sister, wife, or child, to whom the news of his death would with crushing weight bring heartache and tears. When the name of Robert L. Blair, Second Lieutenant, Company G, was called, I listened with intense concern, for he was wife's youngest brother. The report was, "Missing;" no one knew whether captured, wounded, or killed. He had not been seen after a certain charge on the field. Of course I must write home, but I had nothing definite to write; so I went to work hunting among the wounded at the hospitals and among the dead on the field. A sad business! At one time I thought that I had

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found him. I saw two men lying under the same blanket, their feet uncovered, and I thought the feet of one of them looked like Bob's; but when I uncovered them, I found they were strangers placed there preparatory to burial. If you have never hunted over a battlefield among the dead for a friend after night guided by a pine torch, you need not want to. In a little hollow where a small stream trickled, and over which both armies had fought during the day and many fallen wounded or dead, was the most gruesome sight mortal eyes ever beheld. The dead were everywhere. It was apparent that the wounded had crawled over some of the dead to get water and died there, the Blue and the Gray together dead by the brookside. But Bob was not among them. My feelings all the while I was searching for him were very peculiar. I wanted to find him; and yet was afraid I would; that was about my state of mind. Can you understand it? My search was in vain; and so I wrote home that Robert was missing, and we did not know whether he was killed, wounded, or captured. I knew what that letter would do at home; but it was the best I could do. He turned up some

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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three months later a prisoner at Johnson's Island. He had sprained his ankle in the charge, and was not able to keep up with his command as it fell back, and was captured.

The second day after the battle Gen. Breckinridge ordered all the wounded belonging to the Reserve Corps to be taken to the hospital at Corinth, some eighteen miles away. In the performance of this duty my sympathies were much stirred on finding a boy, perhaps not more than sixteen years old, lying in a blanket on the ground. Two fence rails had been placed with one end on the ground and the other on a fence and a blanket thrown over them for a sort of shelter. Here he and another man were together. I saw his pale face, half hidden under the blanket, as he was peeping out at the squad of men gathering up the wounded, and went to him and asked for his command. His lip quivered a little as he said: "I do not belong to your corps; I am from Texas, a cavalryman; am wounded and lost from my company; they do not know where I am." He had heard the squad calling for the Reserve Corps, and did not expect to be taken. But I was interested in the lad, and got down by him and asked

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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some questions about himself. He said he was the son of a widow, and belonged to the Texas Cavalry. Then I asked: "Who is this by you here?" He said: "I don't know; he and I were put here by some soldiers. I never saw him before." And then he added: "He has died in the last few minutes, and I was not able to help him to a drink of water even." The muscles of his face twitched a little as he turned a sorrowful look on the dead man. I thought it not strange that, having lain there and watched the man die, himself wounded, he was nervous and wiped his eyes with the corner of his wet blanket—a mere boy far from mother. I determined to take him to the hospital. His wound was from a ball near the knee, not very serious. I called the squad and told them to take this lad, and said to them: "Say nothing." That was, I believe the only time I ever deliberately disobeyed orders. I would do it again; no one was wronged by it. Some weeks after this I was riding up the streets of Corinth, and a bright young soldier came off the sidewalk into the middle of the street and, taking my horse by the bridle, looked up into my face and said: "Howdy, Major." And seeing

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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that I did not recognize him, he said: "I am the Texas boy you brought off the battlefield at Mickey's. I am nearly well, and have written to mother about your kindness to me."

I was glad I had helped the widow's son.

Our corps remained at Mickey's several days, and then all moved to Corinth. Here I saw the first soldier shot for desertion. Maybe I will tell you about it later.

## XXVII

### SHOOTING A DESERTER



AT the close of the last chapter I halfway promised to tell you about the shooting of the deserter—a poor fellow who ran away to the enemy, and was afterwards captured and courtmartialed. I comply reluctantly; for it is not a pleasant recollection nor such a story as the readers of our good *Midland* will fancy. It was the first and only time I ever witnessed this severe and awful punishment. I suppose it was the only safe way to deal with such an offense, as we had no means of imprisonment for life. The prime object no doubt was to deter others from such dastardly conduct, and hence the execution was in the presence of the whole army. Soldiers from every branch of the service were present by special order. The execution took place in a large open field in which there was a sag, or low place, near the center. About this on the higher ground the troops were arranged all around in full

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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view of the painful scene. The man was brought into this low part and made to kneel behind his coffin, which was set crosswise in front of him. Twelve soldiers were taken by lot to do the shooting, and to each was given a gun; but only six of these guns were loaded; the others had blank cartridges. No man knew whether his gun was loaded or not. In this way each man was relieved from the painful knowledge that he had fired the fatal shot. The men who did the shooting stood some twenty yards from the culprit, and at the word of command all fired together. Who could help praying at such a moment. "God have mercy on his poor soul?" He was blindfolded, and the word of command to fire was so low that he could not hear it, and therefore did not know the instant his soul was cut off. He just sank down by his coffin when the soldiers fired, and never moved again, as far as I could see. Then we all quietly and silently returned to camp, many sad and thoughtful. Such a scene can never be forgotten. I still carry a mental picture of the doleful tragedy, which time's effacing fingers cannot erase. And I have reluctantly written the account, and only for the gratification of

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those who may be curious to know how such things are done.

We were at Corinth several weeks, and in the meantime the Federals had concentrated their forces until it is said that they had eighty thousand men moving to attack us. We kept up the show of fighting—built breastworks, cut trenches, and daily stationed men in the pits. This we did to give opportunity to remove all supplies, intending when this was done to evacuate. We had but a handful of men compared to the enemy's great army. The evacuation was by strategy. When the time came, Major Boyd, the commissary, and I received two orders, one sealed, with instructions not to open till we had crossed the river. The open order was to move the camp early next morning. That meant take everything belonging to the camp—tents and camp utensils. This order put everything in motion, wagons, teams, etc., and motion and commotion was the order of the morning. Major Boyd and I rode on before, and, having crossed the river, sat upon a log and opened the sealed order. It directed us to move with dispatch toward Baldwin, Miss. We found that the road had been worked and bridges



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repaired and sign-boards put up, preparatory to our movement. It was apparent that the object was to get away from the enemy unhurt, if possible. Very soon after we got under way all sorts of flying rumors were circulating; one that the Federals had discovered our purpose, and that their cavalry had flanked our forces and were coming to capture our train. This, at least, had one good effect: it kept our wagons close up and made the mules lively. The train was a long one, and we had no guard accompanying us; and had the enemy come, they could easily have taken everything. That night we found a sort of horseshoe bend in the creek inclosing three or four acres of ground. Here we parked the wagons, driving them close up, side by side, the teams all inward. Within this circle we put the mules and did our little cooking and slept. The circle left only thirty or forty feet of a gap where cavalry could get at us without crossing the creek and running into the hind end of a wagon. This was the best we could do. Well, no enemy came. And the next day we went on to Baldwin, and soon on to Tupelo, and then to Vicksburg. Here ten batteries had been planted along the bluff

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above and below the town. They had twenty-nine guns in them; two were heavy ten-inch Columbiads; the others were old forty-two and thirty-two pounders. They constituted the only hindrance to the full possession of the Mississippi River by the enemy, and were regarded as vital to our cause. Our business was to support these batteries. I remember well the day we took our places. Our camp was two miles above the town, and the battery we were to support was half a mile below. We had to pass through the town, and the main street ran right along on the bluff, the houses facing the river in full view of the Federals. Not wishing to advertise our movements by going the front street, we opened the fences and passed back of the houses through the yards and gardens. Here I found and ate the first figs and pomegranates I ever saw—just rode in under the trees and helped myself. Let me write a line here for the children; you old folks who know everything need not bother with it. The pomegranate mentioned is not the little striped fruit, large as a “hen egg,” that grows on the ground like a little melon, and when ripe has a pleasant smell, which we children called a pomegranate; but it is the fruit so highly

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prized in Palestine that Moses named it as one of the good things promised to the Israelites. It grows on a small shrublike tree, much the size of our quince, is as big as a large apple, and very beautiful. It makes your mouth water when you see it, and is full of generous juice that is cooling and slakes thirst. It is mentioned often in the Bible.

These batteries thoroughly blockaded the Mississippi River, and no boat could pass in safety. Therefore, the enemy determined to silence them by a naval attack if possible, and so concentrated all their gunboats, thirty-five in number, and on the night of the twenty-seventh the whole fleet bombarded the town and country around for several hours without cessation, but at a respectful distance from our batteries, which did not reply. What a night that was! I was in camp two miles away, but could see the light of the fuse attached to the shells as they came up from the boats in the river, flying like firebugs through the heavens, and hear the thunder of booming guns and bursting shells. Next morning at daylight the boats commenced with great fury. The enemy had evidently determined to make one concerted effort to take the town.

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The boats from above and below the town, thirty-five of them, moved rapidly together right up before the town, hurling shot and shells as they came. Our batteries opened up upon them as soon as they came in range, and now for the first time the ten batteries in full force thundered upon them, and with deadly effect. The roar of cannon was now continuous and deafening, the hills shook, and the very heavens were jarred by the thunder; shot and shells went shrieking and screaming everywhere, tearing everything into splinters wherever they went. A sublimely awful scene! This fight continued an hour and a half, they said; but it seemed much longer than that to me. A shot from a cannon we could easily escape behind the hills; but an old mortar just pitched its shells up over the town, and often they fell right down back of the hills, and one could make no guess where they would strike. They hit you as likely behind a hill as in front of it, the hateful things! This fight seemed to convince the enemy that Vicksburg could not be taken by a naval attack. Not one of our guns was displaced or seriously injured, and but few were killed or wounded. The gunboats with-

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drew, and the siege was over, at least for the present. An attack by land was next determined upon, which they made a year later, and successfully. But I was not there, and can have no recollections of it.

Here I witnessed the great historical fight between the Arkansas Ram and a number of the enemy's boats above the city. The Ram was built up the Yazoo River, and when finished came right out into the Mississippi, where eight or ten of the enemy's boats were waiting for her. She was covered with railroad iron, laid close like boards. There was a small space under the eaves just large enough for the working of the guns above the water, and she had a large sharp iron snout or horn in front with which to ram any boat ahead of her. She carried ten guns, some of them large, all arranged on sides and ends, three on each side and two on each end. Of course she sank very deep in the water, having all that iron on her, and looked not unlike a huge turtle with an iron back. To meet her the Federals had a sort of half moon of boats at the mouth of the Yazoo. I sat on my horse right in front of the city and saw the Ram come out of the Yazoo, and witnessed that wonderful fight.

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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One large wooden boat, painted the color of iron, got immediately in front, while the others fired harmlessly at her. She rammed the wooden boat, they said, making a hole as large as a flour barrel, and left her friends to take care of her and her crew. After this they kept out of her way, but followed her down the river, firing after her with little effect. She disabled several of their boats, firing into them as they got in range of her guns. When she came under our guns on the bluff, they greeted her, giving the enemy's boats a few well-directed shots, which sent them back up the river. The Ram had made her first fight, and came to our wharf but little injured. Soon she moved on down the river, cleaning up everything as she went, on her way to Baton Rouge, where the enemy had some boats and infantry troops. This led to the necessity of having some infantry there to help her in the fight. Gen. Breckinridge was ordered to take his command to Baton Rouge for that purpose. This carried us from Vicksburg, to Jackson, Miss., and down the Illinois Central Road to Tangipahoa, in Louisiana, sixty miles from Baton Rouge. Here our forces left the railroad and marched

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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across the country, many of them sick and half sick. At Vicksburg I had bought a hundred acres of corn in the "roastyear" for the mules; but the boys found it out and gathered and ate it about the time we left. No wonder they were sick in that hot country August 1. Poor fellows, how my heart did ache for them when I saw them drag themselves off on that sixty-mile march over that hot, dry road! I was left at Tangipahoa (the Camp was called "Camp Moore") to forward supplies to the army. When they were ready to start, I ventured to ask Breckinridge what they were going to do. He answered: "It is a piece of damned nonsense; we go to fight some gunboats." That was the first and only time I ever heard him use a rough word. Indeed, he was a charming gentleman, always polite, and always treated me with profound respect. He was one of the few men whom I have known intimately to whom "distance lent" nothing to the view; he was as big as a house and as high as the sky, even when you stood daily by his side. A few years ago, on a moonlight night, with George Stuart and his wife, in the city of Lexington, Ky., I strolled out to his equestrian monument near the Court Square, and after a

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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soldier's salute I removed my hat and stood uncovered, thinking of stirring scenes and other days, never to be forgotten. Peace to his ashes and blessings on his friends! Old Confederates, say amen!



## XXVIII

### *CAMP AT TANGIPAHOA*



AT Tangipahoa, La., we spent the month of August, forwarding supplies to boys who had gone to Baton Rouge. We brought no wagons with us, and had to gather up wagons and teams from the country around; and in doing so I learned some things. We had no trouble in getting the neighbors to send in wagons. The country was full of hot bloods, ready to give everything to the Confederacy. But the wagons sent were drawn by oxen, and it would take them ten days to make the trip. I inquired if this was the best they could do. An old farmer answered: "You are in the cotton belt here, and cotton raisers do not have fine wagons and teams; a few small mules to scratch around the cotton and an ox team to haul to the gin are all they need." Then he added: "If you will go nearer to the river, where they raise sugar cane, you will

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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find good wagons and fine mule teams." This we found to be true. When the cane is ready to harvest, it must be done at once, and requires good teams and wagons, for it is heavy to handle.

I was a little amused, when the post quartermaster at Tangipahoa came to turn over the government property at the post to me, to find a large number of mosquito nets in the account. It had never occurred to me that mosquito bars were a part of a soldier's outfit. However, we soon found a reason and use for them. My, my, how they did buzz and bite!

The fight at Baton Rouge was to be made mainly by the Arkansas Ram, then on her way from Vicksburg, scheduled to be at Baton Rouge on a given day. Our boys got there and brought on the fight, drove the enemy back to the gunboats, and waited for the Ram to put in. Soon the news came that she had gotten within a few miles of the place and had broken some important part of her machinery and had been destroyed. The boys brought back the news. The fight did not amount to much; but we lost a superior officer, Genl. Clark. As soon as the command got back to Tangipahoa we were ordered to Jackson,

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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Miss. Here some little rearrangement of regiments took place, and I was promoted to division quartermaster. This relieved me of many petit details of the office. Here we paid off the soldiers, and rested a few weeks. And while here I received a letter from home, saying that Bob, whom we lost at Shiloh, was at Johnson's Island a prisoner.

Now an order came to send all the division to Grenada, Miss. This set us all wondering what it meant. I have already stated that Breckinridge's division was composed largely of Tennessee and Kentucky regiments. The troops had been gone but a few hours when another order came to recall all the Tennessee and Kentucky regiments and send them immediately to Meridian, Miss., and for me to follow at once with all the wagons and camp equipage. And now we began to guess what this meant. Gen. Bragg was at this time in Kentucky, and we hoped this would take us to him. Breckinridge was very popular in his native state, and it was thought that many recruits would rally to him if he were there. Well, our guess and hope were right, for when we got to Meridian, I was ordered at once to take the train that night, with my belongings,

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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and hasten to Mobile, and make arrangements to ship all to Knoxville, Tenn. How our hearts did leap at the thought of getting back toward the mountains and home again! But we were worn out, having worked all night, and we were sleepy and half sick. I asked the General if we might not rest for the night and go on in the morning. He said: "No; but I will fix for you to sleep." So he ordered a box car to be brought near to our camp. We got into it and went to bed, with the understanding that it would go with the passenger train that night. And it did; but we were all asleep and knew nothing of it. We waked up at Mobile in time for breakfast at the Battle House. We had but little to do here, as the post quartermaster already had orders to supply all necessary transportation for our command. We took dinner, made up largely of turtle soup (my first), and pushed on to Montgomery. Here we spent Sunday, and I preached twice. My old classmate, James O. Patton, was here, a druggist, doing a successful business, and maintaining the merited character of a high-toned Christian gentleman. How delightful it was to talk over the old days of our boyhood at Emory and

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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Henry College! The war was almost forgotten for an hour or two. The boys came on in a day or two; and a jollier set you never saw, singing "Homeward Bound." I had everything ready, and they climbed into and upon box cars, and shouted like wild men as they moved off for the mountains of Tennessee. And I said to myself: "Dear fellows, you will bring sorrow as well as joy when you get home, for you are not all here who started out with us two years ago." I stopped off at Chehaw, and ran out six miles and spent the night with my brother, Nathan Asbury. He had not gone into the army, but was a member of a company all ready to go to Virginia.

Well, here we are back home again, with old friends and familiar scenes on all hands, plenty of bright, fresh water, and September breezes from the mountains. Many of the boys got permits to run out and see their home folks. I could not go; but wife came down and brought the baby, Zollie, with the nurse, to stay till we might be ordered on. We had our office in the old Franklin Hotel, which stood on Main Street, near where the court house now stands. Wife directed our man of

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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all work how to arrange things, and stayed with us, making it all the more like home. How our old army cook did lay himself out rubbing up our well-worn cooking utensils till they shone bright as a new pin, and hunting up something good to eat every time! How much of it he may have stolen I never knew, though my suspicions were sometimes aroused. Indeed, Capt. Lewis and I had some reasons to doubt whether our man, Friday, might not consider hunger on the part of a soldier who was fighting for his country a just reason for "laying supplies," without carefully investigating the title or ownership—*e. g.*, one morning while encamped near Jackson, Miss., he gave us a nice pork chop for breakfast. I said to him: "Sandy, where did you get this nice pork?" "Why, boss, Major Boyd sent it to you with his compliments this morning." This was satisfactory, for we knew that if the Major, who was commissary, and our personal friend, had a piece of nice pork, he would divide with us. Soon we started to the city, and had gone but a short distance when we saw a strange, broad mark right across the road before us. A little investigation satisfied us that it had been made

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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by the dragging of a hog across the road. I said: "Captain, this is all wrong. The soldiers are killing this man's hogs." Then I added: "Let me hold your horse and you follow this mark and see who is doing it." The Captain jumped over the fence and ran through a little patch of underbrush, following the mark easily. Soon he returned smiling, and said: "Major, that mark brought me right around back of our tents. It was the ham of that hog we had for breakfast." Sandy, the sinner, had been foraging. We gave him a mild reproof, and let the matter drop. Capt. Lewis and his brother, Lieut. Duff, were among home folks, and happy as larks in May.

I told the boys of the Nineteenth that we would have preaching one night in the grounds of the Deaf and Dumb Asylum. We met, and I stood with my back to the wall of the house, while the boys gathered round on the grass. It was so dark we could not see each other; but when I began to sing I heard them all about joining in. There and then I preached for them for the last time as their chaplain. And I am wondering now who among them present still remains this side the river.

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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Dear fellows, forty-six years have thinned our ranks till only a gray head here and there remains. God help him wherever he rests or roams and bring him home when life's warfare is over!

Soon orders were issued to prepare to move. This brought the men back who had run out to see home folks, and set me gathering corn for the stock, as the country had been robbed of nearly everything to eat. But before we were ready to march for Kentucky to join Bragg, the news came that he was coming out of Kentucky through Cumberland Gap and many Kentuckians were accompanying him. This changed all our plans. The idea of going to Kentucky was abandoned, at least for the present. Mrs. Breckinridge came out also and joined the General. They had headquarters at Col. Churchwell's, near the present suburb of Oakwood. Many old friends of the General came also, business men who had to give up home. They naturally turned to their old friend, Gen. Breckinridge. And now I saw a chance to relieve myself of a great responsibility, and at the same time do them a favor, by resigning my position and letting some one of them have it. I had



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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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offered my resignation once before, but the General would not recommend its acceptance. Now I saw a good reason for his doing so. I got on my horse one evening and rode with him out to his headquarters and asked him to accept my resignation and recommend for the place some one of his old friends, who would be glad to be near him. We talked it all over and finally he said: "And what will you do?" I answered: "My Conference will meet in a few days at Athens, Tenn., and I shall go and take regular work as a traveling preacher." Then with a smile he said: "Where will they send you?" I said: "Of course, I cannot tell; but I think they may send me back here to Knoxville." "Well," said he, "I am going to leave Mrs. Breckinridge here with Col. Churchwell; and if you will be her pastor, I will endorse your resignation." Of course, he said this out of a mere compliment. I was introduced to Mrs. Breckinridge and found her to be small of stature, of charming modesty and very engaging manners. We talked of the probability of my coming to Knoxville, as pastor in our church, and I assured her of cordial welcome among our people. Well, I went back to town in a

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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very cheerful mood, and told my wife what we had done. It got abroad in Knoxville that I had resigned my position and was going to Conference to take work. And this I did. It was the somewhat noted, not to say notorious, Athens Conference of 1862. And sure enough, I was appointed to Knoxville. And here my war experiences as an officer end. I was out of the army and back again in the old harness of pastor.

## XXIX

### *AT KNOXVILLE*



ELL, having resigned my office, I was out of the army, but not out of the war, for it was everywhere, the all-absorbing thought and subject among the people. Knoxville was much mixed on the question of secession. There were many Union men, all in sympathy with the Federals. Many of them were good and reputable citizens, who would have scorned to do an ignoble thing; but the atmosphere was such that bitter, bad men came to the front, and made war worse than war. The Church Street congregation, which I served at Knoxville, was in full sympathy with the Confederacy; but it was composed largely of thoughtful, pious, conservative men and women, who kept politics out of their religion. This has been the character of that congregation for fifty and more years to my personal knowledge; thoughtful, pious, conservative—maybe a little too conservative—but always religious, work-

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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ing people, loyal to God and humanity. I know no better below the big, round sun than the old hive, from which have swarmed many colonies of good workers about the city. There was no parsonage, so we rented a house down on East Main, opposite the Bell House, brought what furniture we had left at Jonesboro, and went to housekeeping. Many of the men who belonged to the congregation were away in the army; but there were many strangers about the city who worshiped with us. I kept my quasi-promise with Gen. Breckinridge, and was pleased to see his wife often in the congregation, a devout worshiper. Many soldiers about the city met with us in the Sunday services. But the whole community was in a turmoil. It is hardly possible for one not present to conceive the utter confusion—everybody excited, soldiers marching with drum and fife through the streets hourly day and night, guard mounting right on Gay Street, railroad trains crowded with soldiers and citizens going and coming. Strangers filled the hotels, and every now and then a squad of prisoners were brought in, and often among them were old acquaintances, whose hospitality I had en-

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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joyed in my itinerant rounds. They would come up close to me and with a voice subdued by tender emotions inquire how they could manage to get back to wife and children.

But it is an ill wind that blows nobody good; and in the coming and going of men and armies we at our house got some good things, for occasionally a half-sick or worn-out friend would drop in and spend a day or two in our humble home, to our great delight. What a memorable pleasure it was to have such servants of God as Drs. J. B. McFerrin, A. L. P. Green, and Joseph Cross come to our house for something to eat and a quiet room where they could rest a day or two on their rounds visiting the boys in camp! And we will never forget the preaching they did for us at old Church Street—how they took hold of our heads and then went down into our hearts for a surer faith and a better life. Thank God that we ever knew such mighty men and heard such helpful preaching! Uncrowned kings they were.

My old command was soon moved to Murfreesboro. And, O, how I sorrowed to see the dear fellows go! for I knew many of them would never get back. And now we

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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were in the midst of many things well remembered; a few only may be written here. A little incident, mentioned in a former chapter, concerning Rev. R. P. Wells, pastor of the Presbyterian congregation at Jonesboro, and my associate principal of the school there, comes to mind just here. He was a Northern man; and though he had been South some twelve or fifteen years, he sympathized with the North in the war. As matters grew more and more warlike, he desired to get through our lines and go North. Such were conditions at Richmond that he could not get through that way, so he wrote me to know if I could not get him through by way of Murfreesboro and Nashville. Gen. Buckner was in command at Knoxville at the time, and after hearing the facts agreed to send him to Breckinridge at Murfreesboro. I had some quartermaster's papers that required the signature of Gen. Breckinridge; and Capt. Lewis, who was to take the papers, said he would go along with Mr. Wells and help him through. I so wrote Mr. Wells, and in a few days he came with his family to Knoxville, delighted with the arrangement. When all was ready, wife and I went with him and his family to the train, and

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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Capt. Lewis took charge of the company. Mrs. Wells was abundant in expressions of gratitude for our services. Just before the train pulled out Mr. Wells took me to one side and offered me a twenty-dollar gold piece, saying: "I want to pay you for your help in this matter." It hurt me that he should think of such a thing, and I said: "Wells, have we been so long together, and yet you do not know me?" He put the piece back into his pocket; and although not a demonstrative man, he was much moved. After a few words about our old associations at Jonesboro and some renewed pledges as to the *great future*, we parted to meet no more below. But I shall be pleased to meet him where wars disturb not, and this I fully expect to do. Capt. Lewis, on his return, reported that he got the pass from Breckinridge, took a hack, and delivered Mr. Wells and family within the Federal lines. I love to recall these things; they smooth the furrowed brow of cruel war.

The Federals were now inching their way toward Knoxville, and reports came almost daily that they were marching to attack the city. I recall a day of great excitement when we learned that the enemy was coming sure

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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enough. Of course the whole town, soldiers and citizens, women and children, white and black, were excited; everybody hurrying here and there, and all asking questions that no one could answer. There were but few soldiers about, as almost all had been sent to Murfreesboro. Hastily, on the summit, where the Catholic church now stands, we made some slight breastworks of a few cotton bales, and brought a small gun, a four or six-pounder, there. There were no houses on the summit then. The infantry, at "double-quick," hurried through the streets to form a line of battle on "reservoir hill," out of town then. And thus we waited but a short while, when from the two hills could be seen a small body of the enemy's cavalry over on the face of the hill where Fifth Avenue is now located, moving among the trees. There were no houses there then, but some timber, which partially concealed the troops. Capt. McClung had charge of the gun on the summit. Soon we saw that the enemy had a gun, which they brought out into an open space and turned upon us. Capt. McClung replied with good effect. Only a few shots were fired, and the enemy hurried on in a gallop, leaving a



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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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dead horse or two. If any of their men were killed or wounded, they carried them away. One of their shots, perhaps the last, passed between two of our cotton bales, and mortally wounded Capt. McClung, to the great grief of all the town. The enemy moved off hurriedly toward Strawberry Plains, and we saw them no more. Their purpose was not to attack the city, but to burn the railroad bridge at the Plains. Their feint was to keep the troops at Knoxville from following them or sending help to the guard at the bridge. Our infantry remained in line till night. Late in the evening wife and I, with many of the good citizens, went out carrying baskets and boxes, coffee-pots and pitchers filled with good things to eat and drink, good things and plenty of them for the boys still in line on the hill. And it was a genuine pleasure to see the hungry, roughly clad soldiers eat, and to note the gentlemanly recognition of the kind ladies who so gladly served them. Occasionally, for a moment, a tender boy yet in his teens would seem to dream, and something like a shadow would pass over his face as he watched the good women, so like mother far away in the old home, and he

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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would swallow as if his bread was too dry. We stayed with them till night, and emptied our baskets and boxes into their haversacks before we left. The wounding of Capt. McClung was the sad event of that most stirring day—Knoxville's first experience of war at the door. He was a popular officer, and a member of a large and influential family of McClungs, who for the last three-quarters of a century have had much to do with the making and molding of Knoxville. His funeral was a memorable occasion, being the first soldier buried in the city. The funeral procession, composed of soldiers and citizens, extended quite through the town, while spectators lined the streets on both sides all the way. All hearts were touched when his riderless horse, carrying his holster and sword, passed by, led by a servant close behind the bier. All Knoxville was sad that day.

The concentration of forces for the great Murfreesboro fight left East Tennessee, and especially Knoxville, almost entirely unprotected. There was distress and grave apprehension on all sides. Many citizens refugeeed, some going in one direction and some in another. Dr. Joseph Martin, pastor of the

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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Presbyterian Church (there was but one Presbyterian church there then) was a warm friend of mine, and a warm friend of the Southern cause. We were often together in our pastoral rounds, and talked over the situation. He had not been connected with the army, but was known to be a staunch secessionist, and did not want to be caught in the Federal lines. I had been an officer in the army, and it had been widely known among the Union people in and about Knoxville, and by some in the Federal army, who would gladly have seen me a prisoner. This I knew, and determined not to be captured if I could help it. Dr. W. E. Munsey was stationed at Chattanooga, and about this time quietly concluded to take his wife up to Jonesboro, where her father-in-law lived, and where there was less danger of Federal interference. Dr. Martin went South, Munsey East, and wife and I began to get ready to leave. I boxed up my books, took my wife's piano and sewing machine and pictures and bric-a-brac, and left them about in the homes of our friends, mostly with Union people, as we thought that they would be safe in their hands. Then we put such things as

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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we thought we might need in a freight train to go to Jonesboro. Our departure was hurried by the report that the enemy was approaching the town. So we took the first train out, which proved to be the last one out. The freight train that had our household goods was captured, much to our regret, as it contained our wearing apparel, and some bedding, etc. But *we* got out and were congratulated by our friends, who feared we had been caught within the Federal lines. Here at Jonesboro we found Munsey and family. Our wives were full cousins, brought up side by side in this old town. My wife's father had died in the month of March before, leaving her mother with a large family, white and colored, to look after. We had a few days here with old friends; but they were days of unrest, for we had no forces in upper East Tennessee to keep the enemy back; and in the town and country around were many Union folks who rejoiced over the situation, and were ready to furnish information to the Federals as to the number and location and movements of what few troops we had. And so we were on the run—refugees.

### XXX

#### REFUGEES



**A**T Jonesboro on the run, a refugee. Here is wife's old home, and, as stated in the last chapter, her mother, with the care of a large family, white and colored. "What shall we do?" was a puzzling question. The Federal forces were pressing in on all sides, guided and encouraged by Union friends, of whom there were many. The worst elements of society were aroused, and bad men took occasion to vent their spite on such as they did not like, old family feuds broke out afresh, and the land was full of murder and robbery. Bands of the worst men seized the opportunity, and scoured the country by night, calling quiet old farmers to their doors and shooting them down in cold blood. This caused other bands to unite and retaliate. It was the reign of terror—war at every man's door, neighbor against neighbor. Neither property or life was safe

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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by day or night. O, the horrors of such a state! We determined to go on to Virginia, and get out of this sort of double war, "fighting without and fears within." When our friends learned that we were going, several of them who had negroes came to us and requested us to take their negroes with us to keep them out of the hands of the Federals, saying they would pay all expenses if we would just let their servants go along with us as though they were ours. We took a wagon loaded with such things as we guessed we might need, a pair of good mules, and put out. With us we had a negro woman and four negro men, polite, good servants, ready to do anything that was to be done for the comfort of the company. They were negroes of more than ordinary intelligence, having been brought up in good families, and must have known what this movement meant, and yet they were a cheerful, jolly set, contented and happy. I doubt if they or any of their race have been happier since.

We spent a few days at Bristol with wife's brother, Andrew, and then pressed on to the good town of Wytheville, Va. I was very familiar with the country, having traveled it

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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often, and knew almost every family on the way, so we easily found friends and shelter. The people were all secessionists and at peace among themselves. To us who had just come out of the bitter strife going on at home this was most restful. At Wytheville we found Dr. Munsey and family comfortably quartered among old friends. He was brought up in the adjoining county of Bland. We found pleasant entertainment with Mr. Joseph Hurt, and his wife's mother, Mrs. Rich. Rev. John Boring was on the circuit, but his parsonage was in the town, and, just like him, he threw open his doors and said: "Come stay with us." We gladly accepted the cordial invitation, and for a month perhaps enjoyed the delightful Christian home. The memory of those sweet, quiet days come back over many intervening years like the remembered strains of song of other days, and I say: "Thank God for Christian fellowship and for John Boring and his good wife and dear children! He has been a power in our Conference nearly sixty years, greatly beloved and honored. He is a little eccentric at times, but always entertaining and helpful as a preacher. Filled with the Spirit, he has

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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gone shouting on his journey home through all these years." Yes, and we are all praying: "Father, lead him safely to the Delectable Mountains and Celestial City and the shining ones there."

We found but few young or middle-aged men at Wytheville, and no soldiers; they were all at the front with Lee. We stayed here and hereabouts for several weeks. In the meantime I attended a camp meeting at old Asbury on Cripple Creek. This was in one of the very best neighborhoods of all Southwestern Virginia. The fact that the congregations were of old men, women, and children made one think of battlefields far away, where fathers and husbands and sons watched on the front with guns in hand to guard home and loved ones left behind. Here for a few days we were delightfully occupied and entertained amid scenes that recalled familiar surroundings in the happy days of childhood when father and mother camped at old Cedar Springs and Brother Timothy preached and sister shouted, and I cried, but hardly knew why. We felt much at home, and for a few hours almost forgot the warring world without. And how Munsey and McTeer preached



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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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and Jim Fisher sang and Sister Piper prayed and sinners cried for mercy and found it, we will never forget. Here we met many kind people who, among other well-remembered evidences of their Christian hospitality and sympathy for us, driven from home and friends as we were, said: "If the Yankees run you out of Wytheville, come to us; we will divide bed and board with you." I remember that the meeting closed on September 12, 1863. This is fixed in my mind by the fact that there was a big white frost that morning, and the farmers had to hurry home to cut their corn, which in many fields was only a little past "roasting-ear" stage, but if cut off at the ground and shocked up would still mature somewhat.

We remained in the neighborhood a short time after the meeting closed, enjoying the hospitality of our new-made friends in their homes. Here were the Sanderses, the Goses, the Whitmans, the Wards, the Porters, the Keeslings, the Gleeveses, and others; and here, too, lived the widow of Col. Piper, the man who cut his way to the top of the Natural Bridge with a jackknife, as is told in the school-books. She was a superior woman of fine

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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literary taste, a great reader of good books, a charming conversationalist; deeply pious, cheery, and bright as the sunshine that shone on the blue grass hills about her lovely home. At the camp meeting she entertained with marvelous liberality and grace, always having a pot of hot coffee for the late workers in the altar service. She often shouted in the meeting, as she had a right to do, and her neighbors shouted with her, for they believed in her and loved her. She afterwards became the second wife of Rev. John M. McTeer, who was head master at the camp meeting referred to; and head master he was, a superior preacher, fine singer and exhorter, and for many years presiding elder, and often sent to the General Conference. But strange to tell, he never liked to lead in public prayer. His voice had the compass of a huntsman's horn; he could preach to five thousand people at the same time in the woods, and I have seen him sweep the forest like a cyclone more than once on such occasions. He was gathered to his people sixteen years ago, and sleeps well, I doubt it not.

Our visit out, we returned to Wytheville. The war in East Tennessee was peculiar

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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in that neither army held the country long at a time, and this made it all the more horrible. Both armies had East Tennesseans in them, and the friends of both were pretty equally divided at home. Only think of such a state of affairs! The surging in and out of these armies, both foraging on the people while present among them, soon robbed the whole land of horses, hogs, cattle, chickens, and of all food for man or beast. If a family had a few pieces of bacon or a few bushels of corn or wheat, the only hope of saving them was to hide them in some unthinkable place; and even then, perhaps, the next door neighbor was of the other party and would find it out and report when his friends came in. So common was this coming and going of the armies that the people were never at ease, but always distracted between hope and fear. Many rather amusing stories are told how the old men and women who stayed in their homes would puzzle and quiz for an answer when asked by the raiders: "Are you Union or Secesh?" Great numbers of our Confederate soldiers, especially in the latter part of the war, wore blue overcoats which they had captured and which they did not scruple to

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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take and wear if the blue coats were better than their gray ones—and they generally were. So one could not tell from his coat where he belonged (Secesh or Union) when a squad came along, and hence an awkward and embarrassing answer was often given, the guesser having missed his mark.

Occasionally, when we learned that our soldiers held the country, Munsey and I would run down, look around the old home and pick up such things as we needed, and hurry back. On one of these occasions we stopped at Bristol on our return, and while walking about the streets we saw a Confederate coming from toward Blountville riding as for dear life, whipping his horse with his hat, and screaming at the top of his voice: "The Yanks are coming just this side of Blountville." This information concerned us vitally. We saw at the depot an engine and tender, but no other cars. At double-quick we reached the depot, and found the engineer watching the road toward Blountville. We said to him: "You had better get out of here." He answered carelessly: "O, I am not afraid of them; when they come in sight I'll skedaddle." "But," we said, "they are not coming in sight;

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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they will take the old stage road, which passes a mile back of the town and crosses the railroad a mile above here; they will tear up your road and get your engine. You had better go at least beyond the crossing, and then you may make faces at them if you want to." He called for the fireman, we climbed in, and he "pulled out;" but we did not feel altogether safe till we had passed the crossing. This done, we sent a flagman ahead while we crept after him. A passenger train was due in a few minutes. Telegraphs were interrupted just then; a flagman was sent ahead for safety. When the passenger train came up, we gave them the report. They turned back, and we went with them, headed for Wytheville. The report was true in part. The raiders came as far as Blountville, where we had a strong picket force, which engaged them in a little skirmish and turned their course. Soon the Federals were driven out, and then it was thought safe for my wife to make a visit to her old home, and if possible bring her mother out of East Tennessee. She took the children and left on the rather hazardous expedition.

Our Annual Conference was now coming on. It met in Wytheville that year, October

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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7, 1863. Conference met; and while we all felt comparatively safe at Wytheville, we whose families were in East Tennessee anxiously watched the reports of the Federal movement there. Late one evening while Conference was in session I received a telegram from my wife at Bristol, saying: "We are all here safe." This meant that the Yankee raiders were threatening Jonesboro, and she and the children had run. I ran to the telegraph office, and excitedly wrote: "Good, good; I am glad; will be on first train." I begged the operator to send this at once. Well, when I got to Bristol I found her and her mother and the children with wonderful stories to tell how they had escaped the Yanks. After the excitement had subsided, she said in serious tones: "Why did you send me such a message?" This puzzled me, for I thought I had done the nice thing, and said: "Why, what's the matter with it?" Handing it to me, she said: "Read it." It read thus: "Good God, I am glad; will be on first train." The operator had either by mistake or intentionally botched my message. A word of explanation made all clear, and we took a hearty laugh. I doubled the word "good"

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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to express my joy that she and the babes were safe, as I had the right to. And any man may say "good" twice whose wife and little ones are safe. Eh!

## XXXI

### WYTHEVILLE RAID



WHEN we got back to Wytheville, Conference had adjourned. Munsey was sent to Bristol Station, and I, as junior preacher with John M. Crismond, to Independence Circuit, Grayson County, Va. The presiding elder and the people seemed to regard the appointment as nominal. It was not long before the Federals began to make raids into that part of Virginia, and soon the report came that they were making for Wytheville. This aroused the citizens, who began to make preparations to defend the town. Some home guards were sent out on the Tazewell Pike as a sort of picket line to see what was going on and to do what they could to protect the town and country.

Munsey and I had no mind to risk being captured, so we put our heads together and concluded to take our families across Brushy Mountain back to our camp meeting friends on Cripple Creek. This we thought a safe



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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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place for us, being twelve miles from the railroad, with no great thoroughfare leading to it; and there, too, in a fine valley of fertile land lived our new-made friends mentioned in the last chapter—a Methodist neighborhood of well-to-do people, mountains all around, and friends of the Confederacy in every home. A good place you would say, for a couple of refugee Methodist preachers and their families to hide in from war and want.

Old Brother Davidson, Dr. Munsey's special friend, had a pair of fine dapple-gray match horses and a good wagon. As we were looking about for means of transportation, and he for some way to save his property, we met, and the old gentleman said: "Here, take these horses and this wagon. They will be safer with you in the mountains than with me right here on the road the raiders will travel."

Did we accept this kind offer? We did, and, putting our belongings, with our wives and children, in the wagon, we popped the whip over the big grays, crossed Brushy Mountain twelve miles away, and late that evening drove up to David Gose's, in Cripple Creek Valley.

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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Mr. Gose came out, and in hearty tones said: "Are the Yanks after you? Come in."

He was a substantial old Methodist farmer, and had a big house and heart, both warm and wide open. He had no son in the army, and, shut off as he was by the mountains on a good farm, with plenty by him, he had hardly felt the rude shocks of the war.

Here and in the neighborhood around we spent a few days waiting for news from the town and the raiders. When we learned that the raiders had come and gone, then "straight-way," as Mark would say, we returned to town. But matters were too uncertain and reports of coming Federals too rife for our peace. Winter was about over; so Munsey and I concluded that we would go back to our friends on Cripple Creek and, if we could, rent some cabins and go to housekeeping.

And this we did. I rented a cabin, which had not been occupied for many years, from our friend Gose—a good stand-by for us. It stood back of a large hill by a good spring, with only a pair of drawbars leading into that part of the farm. The roof had been what was called a "weight-pole roof." (Can't explain now.) It had rotted and fallen in

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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upon the second floor. The four negro men and I soon had new boards and pole rafters on the ground, and in two days, with the help of a friend or two, had a good roof on it. We now white-washed it thoroughly, and told wife we were ready for her to move in. This was early in April, 1864, I well remember. Well, we moved into it, taking such things as we had brought.

When wife, on her last trip back to Tennessee, induced her mother to come out with her, the old lady had her big feather bed put into the wagon. It made a large bundle, inconvenient to handle, and it seemed almost unnecessary on such a trip; but now we found need for it. One of the neighbors gave us a bedstead, and here we fixed grandma on her fifty pounds of feathers. And she seemed to be at home again, peeping out from under the snow-white frills of her old-time nightcap.

Many neighbors came across the fields to see us; and, like a sort of Preacher's Aid Society, they looked about to see what we needed most, and went back home and sent it to us. Some straw beds came opportunely, and Maj. John Sanders ("John Tack") sent us a milch

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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cow and Mr. Gose gave us pasture for her. The fireplaces had fallen down, and A. J. Frazier, a boy preacher on the circuit and a mason, got a trowel on his rest day and came over and repaired them nicely. Pots and ovens and skillets came in from many kitchens, and some quilts and comforts from the beds of boys who would not need them any more, as they had found a last sleeping place among their comrades on the Potomac, and their mothers said they wanted us to have them.

Soon we were set up in tolerable comfort. I rented a few acres of land, which we planted in corn, sorghum, flax, and vegetables. Don't laugh at my flax. It did well; and I pulled it, watered it, broke it, scutched it, and my wife hackled it and had it spun and woven into flax linen. If you do not know what the words "pulled," "watered," "broke," "scutched," and "hackled" mean as applied to flax, ask some wise old country man or woman, who will tell you. The linen we used for towels, and each one of the children has one. There are a few yards still here in a drawer of souvenirs.

There was no school in the neighborhood, and many children. I opened school in a

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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schoolhouse in sight of the cabin. The charges for tuition were according to grade of studies taken—\$1, \$1.50, and \$2 per month, payable in anything that man or beast could eat or wear. The school brought together a fine class of young ladies, boys, and girls. Soon it grew to be so large that we had to have an assistant and take part of it into a church near by and use both houses. A more delightful school of young people, respectful and studious, I never had. I taught five days in the week and made shoes for my wife and children on Saturday, held Sunday-school and preached on Sunday, as a rule. The school fed and clothed us and the mules well.

Mr. Gose had a small meadow which he allowed us to harvest, one-half for the other. This furnished fine hay for the mules and milch cow for the winter. We made about thirty gallons of sorghum molasses; and one of our patrons from Grayson County, Mr. Hale, paid for his son's board and tuition in nice young hogs, which we fattened on our corn—seven, as I recollect well. Mr. Gose had three or four apple orchards (one of Milam apples) near us, from which he allowed us to take as many apples as we wanted. There

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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were four or five hundred bushels in the orchard. We put eighty bushels in the cellar under the house for winter.

You see we had no thought of starving. Our meat and bread and milk and butter and molasses and apples and rye coffee were in hand. But we had no dog—a great privation to one brought up on a farm, with a pack of dogs about, as I had been. And now, during the three years of the war, the men and boys all gone, the foxes and coons and groundhogs and possums had increased until they were destructive, and needed killing. However, there were several good hounds in the neighborhood; and, as I had a penchant for hunting, I soon made friends with all the dogs around. I got me a horn, such as I used when a boy. Col. John Saunders had a fine one all fitted up ready to hang on the neck, which he gave me. Soon my boy, “Rod,” an old family servant, had plenty of dogs. All we had to do was to go to the top of the hill back of the cabin and blow our horn and half a dozen fellows would come yelping through the fields to our call. And then away we would go over the hills, my Colt’s army pistol in the holster hanging on the horn of my saddle, as

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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usual. We rode generally, being afraid to walk, as there were too many rattlesnakes and copperheads about. Foxes were plentiful and saucy, for they had not been chased these years. So we were not long in making a "start," and soon with five or six good dogs warming to the chase in full cry I was a boy again, and for a little while forgot the war.

Dr. Munsey got him a cabin just around the hill in the next hollow, a half mile away, and began a very similar life, save that he preached in Bristol while I taught school. He usually spent two Sundays in Bristol and an intervening week at home in the cabin. His wife's father, William K. Blair, stayed with his family. We had no telephones in those days; but from the top of the hill between us we could easily communicate, and often did. A word concerning this wonderful man. He was by far the most unique character I have ever numbered among my friends. And friends we were, but little less attached to each other than Jonathan and David. For full twenty years we walked and talked and counseled and prayed and preached together. We were intimate as brothers from the days of his preacher boyhood to the sad day we

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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(Dr., now Bishop, Hoss and I) laid him to rest in the high eastern hill at old Jonesboro, the girlhood home of both of our wives, who were full cousins. What the world already knows about this remarkable man I need not here take time to write. The two volumes of his sermons and lectures, edited by Bishop Keener, have been in the hands and on the shelves of lovers of good literature for a score of years. They are a monument more lasting than granite or brass, revealing his peculiar mental make-up and marvelous powers.

Only a few things will I write here as I saw him and knew him. At heart he was as simple and gentle as a child, as companionable as a schoolboy; in intellect as many-sided as Shakespeare, analytic, philosophic, pathetic, with an imagination which in breadth of conception and appropriateness of expression challenged the most bewildering heights and depths of "Paradise Lost" and "The Inferno." At this I marveled often; but what *most* surprised me was the accuracy of his knowledge of the sciences, art, and literature, and the ease and fluency with which he used the technical terms appropriate to each. He was as much at home in mental and moral science, logic,



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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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rhetoric, mineralogy, geology, astronomy, botany, mythology as if he had spent half a lifetime with the great masters in each; and when any of them came in his line of thought, he walked through their labyrinth with the confidence, ease, and grace of an expert. And this was true whether he spoke to the common people at a great camp meeting or to the learned heads of universities on commencement occasions.

He was a consummate philologist, especially in scientific terminology—knew the word he wanted and got it. And all of this without ever having an hour of college or university training. He was a great reader and an intense student; but was deficient in observation, was self-oblivious when in pursuit of a thought or the best expression of it, as indeed every man is when at his best—the thought fills the whole field of his glass, *the thought exists and nothing else*. At such a time he bit his finger nails till they bled, plucked out his hair till he was bald as an onion, and looked and behaved like a crazy man. His wife laughingly told me this story when I visited them in the city of Baltimore, during his pastorate there: “The Doctor was on the

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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eve of being arrested for a lunatic the other day by a policeman. He was in the habit of going back of his church walking and talking to himself as he prepared his sermons. A lunatic had just escaped from the asylum, and the policeman was looking for him, and on his round heard some strange sounds about the church. Hunting them up, he found the Doctor walking and talking to himself, mumbling some strange things which the police took for the gabble of the lunatic, and proposed to arrest him; but the Doctor proved some way that he was not the lunatic wanted; and so escaped arrest." During the recital of this ridiculous story, the Doctor had a genuine case of *silly grins*. His bright little widow still lives with her sons and a daughter in Washington, D. C.

## XXXII

### *REFUGEES ON CRIPPLE CREEK*



TILL refugees in the cabin on Cripple Creek, Wythe County, Va.! Here we stayed eighteen months, from April, 1864, to October, 1865. And many recollections cluster here. The last chapter closed with some remarks concerning my friend, Dr. Munsey. I want to say here that I have never written anything which fell so far below my own conception of a subject as did my attempt to convey a just idea of that most wonderful man. I shall not subject myself to further humiliation by another attempt, but will dismiss the subject with a brief contrast between him and Rev. Creed Fulton, who was, perhaps, Holston's next most brilliant pulpit man, and much the older man when I knew him. Fulton was a small man, with a large head and face; Munsey was large, weighed a hundred and seventy-five pounds (though he did not look it), tall and straight, with a bald head and restless, quick eye. Fulton had a full, smooth voice, easy,

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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graceful gestures, and charming delivery; Munsey had an inferior, not to say squeaking voice and awkward, uncommon gestures. A very common gesture with him was to place his thumb and forefinger firmly together as if he had a pin between them, points foremost, and then thrust his hand forward as if intending to stick you with the pin; and this he did often with his left hand. Fulton's sermons got much from the deep, mellow tones of his voice and a stately oratorical articulation; Munsey's but little, next to nothing. Bishop Keener, in his preface to the second volume of Munsey's sermons, says justly: "Few sermons ever gained less from mere delivery." Fulton's style was smooth, easy-flowing, often florid, but never sophomoric or flimsy; to characterize the merits of Munsey's would be to sum up those excellencies of prose in which classic Greek at last found its perfect mold. His most finished and vigorous periods are pleasingly relieved by a background of less formally built sentences. Fulton's manner was dignified, senatorial, but never stiff, always pleasing; Munsey's was rapid, often intense. "He was the master of expression with many ideas," says Bishop Keener, "often

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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full of fire and pathos, and often, instead of vigorous compression, he rejoiced in rich diffusion, unrolling itself like a clear river luring the hearer from bend to bend through its soft beauties and bewitching grandeurs along its ever-widening and ever-deepening course." A strange man, with many weird conceptions; we shall see his like no more. And yet I see him now silhouetted in bold relief against a background of elaborate finish, the fearless evangelical preacher, pleading like a child with sinners to come back to their Father God, or hurling like a giant the thunderbolts of massive truth, red-hot, with amazing directness and dynamic force against the sins and follies of the age. A truce to this. Good-bye, friend and brother, good-bye; we shall meet again, and I'll be glad.

Let us go back to the recollections that cluster about our cabin life. Wife had three brothers in the army—Alexander, Robert, and Francis. They each rose to the rank of captain and each visited us in the cabin. Alexander was with Lee at Petersburg, lost his health, and was furloughed, came to us a very sick man, and, after a few days, died suddenly of a congestive chill. Here we were

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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with our dead, and no chance to carry him back to sleep by his fathers in the old graveyard at Jonesboro. So we took him to Wytheville, and James S. Kennedy conducted the funeral from the Presbyterian church. Alexander was a minister of that church, and at one time professor in the Tennessee University at Knoxville. Robert and Frank had both been prisoners at Johnson's Island. I had three brothers also in the army—Nathan Asbury, Morris Clark, and Steven Bradford. Asbury was with Lee, and lost his health and died in the Ladies' Relief Hospital at Lynchburg, where he is buried in the Confederate cemetery. Morris was a member of Genl. Vaughn's Cavalry, and lived through the war. Bradford was captured at Island No. 10, and died a prisoner at Johnson's Island, and is buried there. He was in an Alabama command. Robert and Frank and Morris all came to see us at the cabin, and for a little while we almost felt at home again.

When the spring of 1865 opened, our Confederacy was almost exhausted. There were no more men or supplies at home; Sherman was pressing his destructive way with sword

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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and torch through Georgia; Lee, with his little band of hungry, half-clad heroes, was being worn out at Petersburg by Grant and his thousands, and all the world at their back. Raiders were scouring the country, coming up from Bristol to Abingdon, and on to Seven-Mile Ford, where they took a byroad and came into our Cripple Creek Valley on their way to destroy the Austin lead mines, the source of our lead supply. They followed a road which passed within a half mile of our hiding place, and stopped to feed nearby us. But as they were on a forced march, fearing Vaughn's Cavalry might overtake them, they did not scatter through the country or destroy property, save that now and then a cavalryman, seeing a better horse than his in the field, would stop and make an exchange without consulting the owner.

That was a memorable night when they passed near our cabin. Wife's brother, Robert, was with us. We knew it was possible for them to come in the drawbars a half-mile around back of the hill, but not probable. And there were no Union men about to report on us. However, we did not go to bed, but looked over our pistols, saddled the

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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mules, tied them by the door, and kept watch. Next morning we learned that they had gone on in a hurry, having taken corn enough from Mr. Whitman, our nearest neighbor, to feed on. The community was all astir now, wondering whether the raiders would come back up the valley or get out some other way. The lead mines were only fifteen or eighteen miles down the creek. The air was full of reports. One was that the raiders said, as they went down, they would soon be back. Col. John Sanders had a fine Kentucky horse, which was called Manassas and which he feared would be taken if the raiders should come back up the valley. He sent for me early; and knowing that I was going to run if they came, he turned the horse, saddle and bridle over to me, saying: "Take him; and if they come, mount him and give him the reins, and they will never catch you. He can outrun any horse in the Yankee army." The Colonel was proud of his Kentucky flyer. Well, I took him and rode over to the cabin a mile and a half around the road, had hitched him in the yard, and was just going into the house when I heard a loud and prolonged "Whoopee!" back on the hill



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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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behind me. It was a servant of Col. Sanders, who had cut across the field a near way in haste with a message from his master. I shouted back: "What news?" His reply was quick and loud: "Master says the Yankees are crossing the creek at Mrs. Gleaves'. Come quick!" Mrs. Gleaves lived some three miles down the creek. I supposed that some neighbor had gotten ahead of the raid, and was spreading the news. I took time only to say good-bye, and then let Manassas try his speed back to the Colonel's.

I watched the valley road for Yanks and let my horse have easy rein. It took eight or ten minutes to make the run. When I arrived, I found the Colonel in the yard watching for me. Just across the creek from his house was a high, steep spur of the mountain, heavily timbered, coming down quite to the water's edge; up it was a path the cattle followed going to the "range." He pointed toward that spur, and said: "The negroes and all the stock are gone up the path over the ridge." And he continued: "Mr. David Whitman, with all his hands and stock, are gone on, too. Go ahead, keep together, and stay there until we send you word.

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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The raiders will never find you there." I plunged through the creek, and soon found the cow path, now well worn by the herds that had just gone on. Over in a little cove beyond the summit, a mile back from the valley perhaps, I found the woods full of horses and cattle and mules and negroes and dogs and white folks, all taking it easy, the negroes keeping the stock together.

Here we rested quietly, feeling safe, fearing for those we had left back at home. By three o'clock we began to look for a messenger, and soon one came with the news that the raiders had gone, in haste, toward Wytheville. We returned home at once, glad that peace and quiet reigned again in our little valley. Soon we heard what we took for the boom of cannon in the direction of Wytheville, and naturally concluded that some of our forces had come upon the enemy and engaged them in battle. And so rapid and thunderous was the firing that, having heard cannon in battle before, I concluded it was the clash of arms in close artillery duel. But in this we were mistaken, as we learned next day. The raiders went by Wytheville; and finding our magazine of shells, they set fire to the

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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house, and it was the bursting of the shells we heard. No wonder we, standing on the hilltop listening to the explosions, took it for a great artillery duel twelve miles away. This was the first and only raid, I believe, ever in that valley. But raiders visited Wytheville; and when they came, some of the citizens would run over the mountains to us. What a genuine pleasure it was to share shelter and bread with them!

Soon came the ever-memorable April 9, when Grant and Appomattox became immortal and Lee and his squad of weary men laid down their arms, but not their honor, after five years of unequal struggle. The boys got their paroles, and turned each his face toward home and loved ones. A few of them were on horseback, but most of them on foot, and many on bare feet, weary and half sick. Occasionally one would find us and rest a day or two, and then plod on. Among those who came to us was W. A. Henderson, who while yet a boy, had been a member of my Sunday-school and congregation at Knoxville. How glad wife and I were to have an old Knoxville friend with us! After a few days, he went on to his mother and sister in their humble home

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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and with a manful purpose forged his way to the front among strong men in the profession of law; and to-day, July 21, 1908, holds the honorable position of legal counselor for the Southern Railway at Washington, D. C. I count it a pleasure to number him among my old friends. Few have wrought so well, and none merited more honor. Comrade, well done! May a long twilight await you and an Indian summer sunset close the day without a fleck in the sky!

## XXXIII

### *CAMP MEETING AT OLD ASBURY*



FEW days after Lee's surrender came the news of the surrender of our forces in the South and West. The fighting was done and the surrender made in good faith. And as a man in a desperate encounter, fighting for things dearer to himself than life itself, never thinks of his wounds until the fight is over, so fought the Confederate soldier, nor once stopped to count the cost till now. Having laid down his arms, he began to look around, not so much to see what was destroyed—for that was visible everywhere—but to see what was left, if anything, out of which he could make shelter, bread, and clothes for wife and children. Not the least sad work of all the war was this—looking amid the debris of ruined fortunes and the ashes of burned homes for something worth saving. The war was stopped, but none

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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could stop the hurt—the fearful heartache that would come and still will come when memory, like a tomb-searcher, goes back over the past to uncover the face of long-buried loves. And to add to all this sorrow came the heartless days and diabolic methods of a so-called reconstruction. Horror of horrors! The everlasting shame of our civilization! Cover it up. For the credit of our nation's history, cover it up!

The boys of Southwest Virginia began to come home, some with an empty sleeve, others on one foot and a crutch, and others shot to pieces in various ways. And we at the cabin began to think of moving out to take part in rebuilding desolate places and trying to cover up the ugly scars of war. But I could not go back to Tennessee without being arrested on the charge of treason (see former chapter), and so we remained in the cabin and I taught school for a few months. During the summer we attended another camp meeting at old Asbury. This time we were joint campers with Maj. John Sanders and his family. This was like home again—to find a stranger who was not picking his teeth and invite him to our tent for a meal. We were no longer

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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disturbed by the rude alarms of war; and though a fondly cherished hope was lost, we persuaded ourselves that not all was lost. And so we went to the Lord with humble confession and prayer, and He who knew our hurt came to our help. We had a great meeting, and this you will easily believe when I tell you who were there to do the preaching and to cheer the workers on: James S. Kennedy, E. E. Wiley, W. E. Munsey, John M. McTeer, W. G. E. Cunyngham (just back from the China Mission), John Boring, and George Stewart (not G. R. Stuart, the evangelist, who was a baby then, but George Stewart, the Irishman, born in Ireland, and who had all the wit and fire and genius that belong to the Celtic blood; an Irishman with all his native powers baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire sent down, and with just enough of the brogue to flavor his speech and make his words mellow as honey from the clover field). Holston never had a better man than George Stewart, and few preachers were his equal. He still lives and preaches in his grandson, Dr. J. Stewart French, pastor of the First Methodist Church, Atlanta, Ga. Brethren, look at the list; there were giants in those days.

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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But they are all gone now, save Boring, the Dutchman, and thereby hangs a story I must tell you. I witnessed in that meeting at one of the services an instantaneous outburst of religious feeling, the equal of which I had never seen before and have never seen since in kind. Boring, at the morning hour, was preaching the funeral of an old saint, the savor of whose life was an ointment poured forth among her neighbors. Behind the preacher in the pulpit, which was really a rostrum, wide and long, sat Wiley, Cunningham, Kennedy, Stewart, Munsey, McTeer, and I—quite an array of clerical dignitaries, you see, and all who ever knew them will say they were men not given to extravagant demonstrations of any kind. They were cool-headed, thinking men, rather than emotional or demonstrative. The people were there from the hill country many miles around, for it had been publicly announced that at this hour the funeral of the blessed woman would be preached. What the text was I don't remember, nor much of the sermon. Many unlooked for points were made and developed and illustrated in most unlooked-for ways. It was all like Boring. Finally



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he called a love feast in Heaven, which he conducted himself, calling out the speakers by name familiarly. Among them were Brother Adam, Brother Enoch, and Brother Noah, etc., and New Testament characters were called. He put into the testimony of each some great fact of his known history in his quaint way. None who were present, I judge, will ever forget his description of the flood, the coming of the animals into the ark, and especially the elephant, whose slow movements and great, flopping ears were brought ludicrously before us by the speaker, walking the length of the long rostrum in slow, measured steps, while he worked his hands like fans at the side of his head to represent the ears. Wiley smiled a little and snapped his black eyes significantly; Cunnyngham gave no facial index to his feelings, and seemed to be looking far away, possibly thinking of China or of Siam; Munsey's face was a puzzle—he seemed to be studying the situation and wondering at the man's graphic powers and at the various ways in which things can be entertainingly said and done. The young folks saw the show and enjoyed it as such. Scarcely had the ripple of amusement passed

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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from the faces of the people when almost instantly he passed from the ludicrous to the sublime. I am wont to think that the ridiculous and the sublime must move much on the same plane and often meet at an invisible line; and whether a thought and its expression is on one side of that line or the other depends largely, if not wholly, on conditions—on coexistent emotions or states of mind. Enough of that. Now the next speaker is called: "John, tell us about that Sabbath on Patmos." Instantly all ears were open and silence reigned. An old man stood up, but before he began the story of his exile he lifted his hand and said: "Little children, love one another," in the sweetest musical tones. It was electric and shot like fire all through the audience. The preacher stood for a moment in silence, looked pale as if dead, then leaped high in the air, drawing his feet up under him while off the floor and shouting at the top of his voice: "Hallelujah! hallelujah!" Instantly many in the audience—twenty, perhaps—responded in most exulting tones: "Hallelujah! hallelujah!" And what still surprises me as I recall the wonderful scene was that very few of the people rose

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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to their feet; they just sat and shouted. Such old men as William Foster, Reuben Bailey, Elijah Dyer, and William Rich, old class leaders and superintendents of Sunday-schools—all seated on the front bench—shouted at the top of their voices. They especially attracted my attention, and their looks and words thrilled me. The men in the pulpit were not wholly silent; the Irishman caught the fire and joined in the chorus, and I helped him. We had no closing song or prayer; each just moved out as he was inclined. I went out at one end of the platform, and Munsey at the other. We met back of the rostrum. His face was bathed in tears, and he gave me his hand and said: "Do you know what I am crying about? I don't." We walked off together, wondering at the marvelous manifestation. It was certainly the most unexpected and sudden outburst of feeling we had ever witnessed; and I am still wondering, for I have never seen it on that wise since. If it had been a congregation of children, whose sympathy had been stirred by the recital of some tender incident, I would not have wondered so. But the demonstration was almost entirely by old people,

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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mature Christians. I think I do not to this day quite understand it. Boring told me afterwards that he had spent much if not most of the night before walking up and down along the bank of the creek, praying, with his Bible under his arm. Maybe the key to it all is to be found in that fact.

And now, kind reader, before we leave this story in which I have hazarded the attempt to report Boring in a sermon, let me say that the feet of more than forty tramping years have worn out the line between fact and fancy. Be charitable. I remember but little of the sermon, but the effects of it I shall never forget. No one yet has ever reported a sermon by that eccentric good man. The man and his pulpit manners cannot be put on paper.

Before we leave this camp meeting I must try to give you another incident or two connected with our stay at the hallowed place. I love the old spot and the many good people who live about there. Nearly thirty years ago I had the pleasure of dedicating a church there, and then last fall I was called back to dedicate another. The old church was too small for the growing population, and they

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had erected a larger house with modern appointments for carrying on all church work. This was the one hundred and twenty-seventh church I have dedicated and the last.

More about our meeting in the next.

## XXXIV

### *CAMP MEETING INCIDENT*



TILL at Cripple Creek camp meeting. And now I will tell you of an amusing incident that occurred at the meeting, as I promised in my last chapter. The neighbors were all there, a most excellent and harmonious people. Many were campers, and among them two of the most successful farmers and traders, who often swapped horses and traded cattle: Isaac Keesling and William Horn (familiarily known as "laughing Bill Horn"). And laughing Bill he was. I saw him almost break down an exercise at Emory and Henry College on a commencement occasion, when Dr. Slade, of Virginia, was delivering the literary address in the big tent on the campus. Horn was sitting on the steps of the platform, and an immense audience of Virginia's best families crowded the pavilion. The Doctor, in his address, to illustrate and fix a thought, related a

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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ridiculous story just in point. Horn was giving serious attention to the speaker, who was moving along in rather a quiet, dignified way. The laughable part of the story came most unexpectedly, and struck Horn in his funny place. Suddenly he was seized by a spell of laughter, and trying to suppress an explosion, he threw his hand over his mouth and held his breath for a moment; but finding it all of no avail, he gave up the hope of suppressing the spasm, and leaping off the steps he ran along the aisle emitting peal after peal of side-splitting laughter; and when outside of the pavilion, he gave full vent to his powers, the whole audience, both within and without the tent, caught the spell and joined him. Dr. Slade could do nothing but wait till Horn and his sympathizers got through. This lasted two or three minutes, for Horn was subject to returning spasms. Quiet being measurably restored, the Doctor was about to begin again, when Horn started back to hear the rest of the address; but just as he got inside of the tent another spasm took him, and all order gave way for several minutes, and Horn left the grounds laughing, till you could hear him for half a mile, I guess.

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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Well, it is of this William Horn and Isaac Keesling I started to tell you something at the opening of this chapter. Keesling, one of the choice citizens of the country, was religious; Horn, though big-hearted, good neighbor, and kind husband, was not religious. His wife was deeply pious, and, like all good wives, was very anxious that her husband should be religious. So she asked Christians to join her in prayer for his salvation during the meeting. The preachers all loved the big-hearted sinner, and special prayer was made for him. The Lord heard the good woman and her friends, and soon Horn was a penitent at the mourners' bench. But he found no peace, though he came again and again. Finally the two old preachers, John M. McTeer and George Stewart, went to him in the altar with sympathy, prayers, and counsel to encourage his faith and lead him into the light if possible. As they probed into the case, seeking for the hindering cause, McTeer said: "Brother Horn, genuine repentance includes not only sorrow for sin, but restitution for wrong somewhere. Think along that line, and see if there is anything in the way there." Horn was silent for a moment,



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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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as if in a heart struggle, and then said: "Call Isaac Keesling here." Keesling came quickly, hoping, no doubt, to find his neighbor and friend happy in the sense of conscious pardon. As soon as Horn saw him he pulled out his pocketbook, and, finding a twenty-dollar bill, handed it to him, saying: "Here, Isaac, take this; it is yours." Keesling drew back and said: "Why, Bill, you don't owe me anything." "Yes, I do," said Horn, "for the last time we swapped horses I got you twenty dollars in the trade." "No, no," said Keesling, "you didn't." "Yes, I did," replied Horn, "take it." And laying the bill down on the bench, he turned and went on with his praying. But Keesling would not take it. They say that when men swap horses neither is willing to confess that he got the worst of the bargain. Well, there was the bill, and neither of the men would have it. What to do with it was a question for the preachers to settle. And after a little pious consultation McTeer and Stewart concluded to put it in the missionary collection, as the charge was a little behind there. But what about Horn? Was he converted? Yes, I was told he was happily converted. So ends the story.

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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The summer of 1865 was now far spent. Conference was coming at Marion, Va. The Masonic fraternity at Wytheville had asked me to take charge of their female college there, and I conditionally agreed to do so. Conference met earlier than usual (September 14), with Bishop Early in the chair. This was the first time we had met since the war. There was much trouble, especially in the Tennessee part of our territory, where our houses of worship were being taken from us by force and our preachers threatened with all sorts of violence if they should dare to come into the country to preach. Some of these churches were surrendered in after years, when public sentiment and the civil law required it. Many of them were given up. Munsey and I brought our families to the Conference; they wanted to see the outside world again, having been shut up in their cabins for eighteen months. From the Conference Dr. Kennedy was appointed to the Wytheville District and I to the station. This began to look like getting back to work. And soon we were ready to say good-bye to the dear friends who so kindly took us in when the dogs of war were baying at our heels

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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and to leave the cabin, the blessed old hull which had sheltered us for so many eventful days. And strange as it may seem, the old cabin to this good day, with its rough walls and blackened overhead and broad, generous fireplace, holds in my heart a high place among all the dear spots of mother earth. And the old schoolhouse and the happy group of girls and boys that met me there still have a permanent place in the "recollections of an old man." Indeed, the wear and waste of passing years seemed to have but little effect on our attachment to the dear old spot. Seventeen years later found wife and me back in the same neighborhood, on our way from Independence to Wytheville. We stopped with Mrs. Newland, the only daughter of David Gose, in the same Gose home which took us in in 1863. After dinner wife, whose attachments had great staying qualities, said: "Let's go by and see the old cabin and schoolhouse and church." She knew it was some two miles out of the way and over rough road; but many tender memories cluster about those places, and with a hearty good will I joined her in the wish to see them again. So we turned aside and drove around the hill

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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and to the top, where stood the schoolhouse and church, both looking as when we left, only the worse "for the wear." And there in an open place in full view of the cabin we stopped. It had been abandoned as a residence, but there it stood by the little brook, the "Davy Whitman branch," where Charley and Willie waded and made flutter mills and caught shining minnows for Zollie, then just out of her babyhood; and there by the pool in the stream was the spot still visible, where Mandy made the weekly fires and did the washing, and where we boiled the sorghum, and where we melted the tallow, and grandma on a cold day showed us how to make tallow dips; and near by the little pole stable, where we kept the mules and set the old hen under the trough; and just up the branch the orchard, where we got the Milam apples, and the little patch where we grew the flax. After a half hour, perhaps, of looking and thinking, with only a word now and then, we drew a long breadth, cousin to a sigh, and pulled up the lines and left, to see it no more, save as it is photographed on memory's page.

These lines I write sitting on the porch of a cottage at Galbraith's Spring on this the last

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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day of my eighty-first year, being July 27, 1908. Fourscore and one! Well, I never expected it. But I accept this "length of days" with gratitude as a gift from my Father, who knoweth how to give good things to His children. And musing here in this lovely Piedmont of the Alleghanies, I wonder much at the kind providence that gave me my birth in this the most estimable part of all the world, and these many years of life in the very period of the world's history which I should have chosen as the most desirable. Of some of the infirmities of age I am conscious; my friends doubtless see many more. The keepers of the house tremble; the grinders cease, for they are few; and those that look out of the window are darkened, and the daughters of music are brought low, and the almond tree flourishes, and I am afraid of that which is high. I judge it can't be long till the silver cord will break and the dust go back to its dust, and the children will cry.

And so I am almost daily repeating Ray Palmer's prayer, as was wife's custom before she went away, six long years ago:

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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"When ends life's transient dream,  
And death's cold, sullen stream  
Shall o'er me roll;  
Blest Saviour, then, in love,  
Fear and distrust remove;  
O bear me safe above,  
A ransomed soul!"

With one more camp meeting incident we will leave the dear old spot and take up the events that have made themselves memorable.

## DR. KENNEDY'S EXPERIENCE



IN a former chapter I promised one more incident from the camp meeting. Let me say in the outset that I feel religiously constrained to write this incident, and yet hesitate, for fear it may by some be trampled underfoot, as swine do pearls. I want to believe, however, that most of the readers of our good *Midland* are religious and trying to be more so. And it is with a sincere and humble hope to help such that I write here what is not suited to vulgar eyes. Let hogs root elsewhere for their grubs; there is nothing here to please their taste. It is the simple story of a conversation I had with Dr. Kennedy (now sainted Kennedy) late in the evening at the camp ground while many of the good people were away in the woods at their grove prayer meeting. It was a holy, quiet hour. The hush of evening had fallen on the hallowed spot. A few children were

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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playing on the straw among the rude benches, and the song from the wooded hill above came down to tell us the worshipers were there and God in the midst. Kennedy and I had walked a little, and then turned in under the shed and took seats. It was the day after the funeral preached by Brother Boring, mentioned in the last chapter, and the strange manifestations at that service became the theme of conversation for a while. Then we drifted into our personal religious experiences. He and I had been schoolfellows at Emory and Henry College back in the forties. We, with Richard Childress, our fellow-student, had come from different states to college to prepare for the work of the ministry; neither of us was licensed, and but few knew anything of our purposes. We had all been brought up in religious homes by pious parents—Methodist homes with a family altar in each—and so, like birds of a feather, we flocked together. There was not, perhaps, a year's difference in our ages. We sat together at prayers in the chapel, and attended prayers and class meetings together. Finally we agreed to form a band after the old Methodist rules. We met in one of our rooms before



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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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breakfast each Sunday morning. After a short lesson from the Bible and prayer, we unbosomed ourselves fully to each other, counseled and prayed for each other and our schoolfellows. We thus grew into each other's lives till we were almost one. Twenty eventful years have passed since we left college. Childress had been in Heaven ten years, and we had both married and had small families. But this talking over our experiences, so like the Sunday morning at Emory, almost made us schoolboys again, and we sat close together and talked. But it is of Kennedy's experience on the subject of "perfect love" that I want to write. It so deeply impressed me and helped me that I will give it as exactly as I can in the hope that it may be helpful to some readers who may be seeking for purity of heart and life, for sanctifying grace. He said in substance this:

"When I was connected with the faculty of Randolph-Macon College [this was about four years after he graduated], some of my associates professed to have received this great blessing of 'full salvation,' and they talked it and lived it. I saw that they had something which I did not have, or in a degree I did not

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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have it. I became much concerned on the subject, and prayed and read and sought counsel of my brethren. Long I struggled without making any headway apparently, only my concern deepened until at times it was almost an agony. I put all their experiences together, and all I could get from books, and finally came to this conclusion: That this higher experience of divine love, this fullness of God in the soul, was possible only on the entire and absolute consecration of self and all I had to God for time and eternity. This I settled upon as a first and essential fact. And I acted upon it and did bring self and all I had, *as I thought*, an offering to my Heavenly Father. But I did not find relief; neither joy nor peace came. This state of things continued for several days, and I was led to wonder if I had not made a mistake. Was consecration a first and fundamental step? By and by, seated by my fire one night, wife in the bed, I in great distress of mind, I determined to make the surrender more circumstantial by writing it out in the form of a covenant between God and myself. And this I did in detail with pen and ink, mentioning item by item—myself,

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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my body, soul, and spirit, intellect, sensibilities, and will, and all that I possessed—in due form of covenant, with all solemnity, as if I knew God were reading the items after me. It was a solemn midnight hour with Him alone. I then signed my full name, James Skidmore Kennedy, to the document, sealed it up, and put it in my trunk to be sacredly preserved.

“With some measure of expectant faith I went to bed, but not to sleep, for sleep was gone, but to think on this solemn transaction. After a while, as I turned the matter over in my mind, I began to wonder why my offering, so circumstantial, so utterly sincere and honest, was not divinely accepted, or why I had no evidence of its acceptance, when there came into my mind, with all the clearness of some one speaking to me, this: ‘Your wife’s name is not in the document; you did not put her into the covenant.’ It startled me as if an audible voice had broken the dead silence. I thought a moment and saw the fatal omission. But here was a solemn covenant sealed and deposited to be kept sacredly. Had I the right to break the seal? Finally I felt that it was the Lord speaking to me, and

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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that I had under the circumstances His permission to open it. I got up, took out the paper reverently and opened it, and at the proper place in it wrote distinctly the full name of my wife and sealed it up again."

Kennedy sat for a moment silent, the muscles of his face twitching and his eyes filled with tears. I saw that his whole frame was shaken, and I was wrought up almost beyond self control and said: "What did you do? Did you shout?"

"No," he said, "but I wept the sweetest weeping; my head was water, and my eyes fountains of tears. I was filled with a peace that passeth understanding—full of joy and the Holy Ghost."

I blurted out quickly: "Go on! go on!"

He looked at me with a smile and said: "Peace, peace! If the Heavens had gone to destruction about me, I should have smiled at the wreck. I wanted nothing but what I had, and feared nothing that I had not. I felt that God loved me, and for the first time felt that I did love Him with my whole heart and soul and strength."

Many other things he said, for he was in a talking way, and his face glowed as with a

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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divine light. Well, I had followed him step by step, my interest constantly increasing, and when he ceased, I felt that I had been in close touch with Him who said: "Be ye holy, for I am holy." Such an hour means much in one's life.

After a while he surprised me a little, saying: "I have not enjoyed the fullness of this blessing for a season as I used to." And then he asked: "Do you suppose it is because I have ceased to publicly confess it?"

Whether it was his duty to make public profession of it was evidently giving him some trouble. I was not able to solve the delicate question. Reader, can you? It seemed a small matter, and with many who profess to be Christians would have been put by with many other such things in their unsanctified lives as of no importance. But to him who is striving to live the higher life of purity I find it matters much, however small it may be, whether it is duty or not. A single duty neglected or sinful indulgence permitted, seemingly little though they be, will shut out the light of God's holy countenance and shut up the way of access in prayer. "Take off your shoes," said God to Moses; "the ground

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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where you stand is holy." No questions asked, no reasons sought for the strange command: "Do it or die." Little things have great power on holy tempers. An infant's breath that would scarcely stir a rose leaf will soil the polished mirror and blur the image. "Trifles make perfection" in holy living as well as elsewhere, "but perfection is no trifle."

This interview with my Brother Kennedy at the quiet sunset hour was perhaps the best thing I brought away from that memorable meeting. It did me good at the time, and has done me good ever since. And I record it here in the hope that it may help some reader who may be striving for that higher experience possible to Christians. Reader, let us believe that there is a height and depth in the love and peace of God not usually attained in conversion, but may be reached—aye, has been reached—by some at a single bound, as it were, and by others through a steady growth in grace. For myself, I want to go on record here, after nearly seventy years of Christian experience and observation among good men and women, that it is my firm belief that the life of perfect

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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love is possible to faith and obedience. I believe it may be and perhaps ought to be the outcome of a daily growth, but is nevertheless possible at any moment; but at its highest pitch it cannot be maintained as an *emotion*. Other emotions must take place in the heart and necessarily displace these; but as an abiding *principle* this love may and ought to be ever present, governing the life. The unlimited possibility of grace, I firmly believe, without discounting the great essential work of regeneration on the one hand or of running with mystically inclined Christians into fanaticisms on the other. Here is the rarefied atmosphere, the Alpine heights in Christian experience, reached only by sturdy climbers at the sunny tops of high mountains; and he who lives in it must needs have a steady head and the Good Shepherd's crook for an alpenstock to sustain his steps. Holy Father, bring us all to these delectable heights, and keep us there, saved from mistakes and fanaticism. Amen.

And now we must say good-bye to the old camp ground and move on to our field of work. Reader, did you ever camp at a camp meeting? and did you not feel a tinge

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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of regret when the things were all put into the wagon and you got on the top of the bundles and looked back at the dear old place? Well, I feel a bit that way now. But we must go on to work.



## XXXVI

### WAR OVER



ELL, the day came for us to leave the cabin for our work at Wytheville, Va. The neighbors sent us an extra wagon, and Maj. John Sanders sent his surrey and a pair of good horses for the family. We sent our many borrowed things back to their several owners as well as we could remember, and were not long getting the rest of our belongings into the wagons—"a short horse is soon curried." And then we said good-bye and drove out through the old family drawbars. Thoughts would come of the day we drove in, nearly two years before. And such years, not simply for us, but for all our Southland! It seemed almost a new world into which we were driving, for things had changed so much. Full four millions of our agricultural and domestic helps had been taken away from us by the single stroke of a pen. "A justifiable war measure,"

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some may say. Even so it may be, but the *fact* remains nevertheless. The war was gone and yet not gone—the boys had come back, but not all. Many were sleeping on battlefields in graves unmarked, save by some wild flower that had found a genial spot made warm and rich by their patriotic blood, where no sound breaks the silence of night but the doleful notes of nocturnal birds perched on moss-covered limbs splintered and broken by shot and shell in the day of dreadful strife. Surely this was a new world we were driving into, and many were not with us.

And right here at these old bars we may say that, if anywhere, our war experience ends. Here we drove in out of the war, and well-nigh out of the world, and here and now we were driving back to the world, but, I trust in God, never back to war. For, looking over and through it all—the sufferings and deaths, the weary watchings and anxious hours by day and by night, the grewsome and ghostly scenes on bloody battlefields and in hospitals, the deafening thunder of booming cannons and shrieking shells, the destruction of once quiet and happy homes, and the incurable heartaches that ever come and must come for

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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dear ones dead—all come up, and I say: "O War, cruel War, bloody monster, lifting high your head, crested with bayonets, and gnashing your horrible teeth of iron, red with human gore, go to your own hell, and let peace and brotherly love abide with me and mine,"

Well, we drove off from the bars, and it was nearly night when we got to Wytheville. The good Methodist people had taken charge of our rented house and put it in a habitable condition, with many added pieces of furniture which we sorely needed, and were now waiting for our arrival with a good supper on the table. How cordial the smile and warm the handshake that welcomed us, we will never forget. And how quickly the young friends unloaded the wagons and carried the things to a back room! and how the old people sat down with us to supper to make us feel at home! and how the neighbors sent us cream for the coffee next morning! (Ye, we had a little sure-enough coffee, but we mixed a bit of rye with it, that the sudden change might not seriously disturb circulation). All this kindness is still fresh in the recollections of an old man. Among the articles

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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given us was a lamp which was lighted and set on the mantel in one of the rooms. Zollie was just large enough to begin to notice things; and coming into the room where the lamp was, she was surprised, never having seen any lights but our tallow dips. She took me by the hand and led me along, saying: "Come, papa; see, here is a candle in a bottle." She was a regular little "country pud," and a "ninnyhammer," but she was happy; and I am wondering now if the children of to-day in their well-appointed homes of many luxuries and numerous gilded toys and costly wardrobes and children's evening parties, are happier than was this little girl in the cabin, dressed in faded calico made out of one of her mother's thrown-by skirts, with no playthings better than the rough homemade sled on which her brothers carried her down the steep hill like a flying bird, and no evening parties but the imaginary ones for which she made mud pies and cakes down by the branch and then slept with her mother on the big straw bed. You say she was a little ignorant thing. Be it so. "Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise." The "simple life" is still worth the living. The more the

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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education, the better, but true education and the simple life are compatible. They go all the gaits nicely together. That is my text; the sermon later.

Well, we were comfortable in our new home, and soon I was one of the principals of the Masonic Female College and pastor of the church. Our membership was small; the war had depleted it in number and in finances. But the school and the church gave us a reasonable support, and we were content. We remained here three years—the three just this side of the war, when all business was out of joint and had to be adjusted to the new conditions. Greenback money had not found its way very far south, and only a few of the people had any money. Now and then a little silver belonging to some old farmer would creep out of its long hiding place and get into circulation. I remember that the very first money I received for tuition was twenty-two silver dollars from an old farmer who had put it by “for a rainy day;” and now that the rain was over, he dug it up to pay the tuition of his daughter, who was perhaps twenty-three or four years old. I confess it delighted me, for I had not seen any of that sort of stuff for many a day.

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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My negro membership was large and a somewhat puzzling factor in our work. Our custom before the war was to have our colored people sit on the rear seats below or in the gallery, and to give them an afternoon service about twice a month. But now they were free and beginning to assert their independence. I told them of the organization of their people in Philadelphia, Pa., the Zion Methodists; and believing they would do better in that church than in ours, I called their leaders together and explained it to them, and advised them to go into that organization. A letter to this effect soon brought a representative of that church to see me. We got the colored folks together, and after a little talk they agreed to go in a body to that church. So I took the church register and transferred them. The work was done, and all were pleased.

And now that I have mentioned the negro, as he goes from us an army of recollections and a just recognition of our obligations to him come up and demand a place and honorable mention here. The negro is constitutionally a cheerful, good-natured, happy, musical fellow, and bears servitude kindly.

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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Unlike the red man, who is unsocial and revengeful, the negro loves company and readily forgives an injury. As a rule, he was as faithful to his old master both before and during the war as the sleepless watchdog at the gate. It was his habit to sing while at his work; and by common consent he has a strangely musical voice, but not suited to martial measures. No one ever heard him make a mistake in time, melody, or harmony; they seemed to be natural to him. He rarely ever sang the national airs, "YankeeDoodle" or "My Country, 'Tis of Thee." The plaintive and pathetic suited his voice and taste. Ghosts and war frightened him, so he sang of domestic scenes and occurrences: "My Old Cabin Home" and "The Little Log Cabin in the Lane" and "Massa's in the Cold, Cold Ground." I hear him now, away in the back of the field; and the mellow tones of his peculiar voice come sweet and plaintive, like the sighing of the winds in a distant forest, and make one think of the soft light of a Southern sunset sleeping in the far-away valleys.

And here let me tell the young folks of a corn-shucking at our house when I was a boy.

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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A thousand bushels of corn had been gathered and thrown in a heap a hundred feet long, perhaps. I was sent to invite the neighbors to the shucking. The white folks would come and shuck during the day, and the negroes came at night and finished the job. There were a good many negroes about town, two miles away. Father went to see their owners, and asked them to allow their hands to come to the shucking; and then he would see two or three of the leaders to head the procession and bring them out. I shall never forget one moonlight night, after the white men had gone home and the country negroes were at the corn heap. We heard some thirty or forty more coming from town singing at the top of their voices. They sang right on up to the pile of corn, and fell to work as orderly as drilled soldiers. The heap was soon divided by laying a fence rail across at the middle, and two captains selected their men "time about," and the contest began. Fifty or sixty sturdy fellows were now tearing the shucks like madmen. Now and then there was a snatch of a song, and then a "Hurrah for Captain Lowry!" answered by the other side with a double "Hurrah for Captain



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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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Keith!" Then the big white ears went over the heap in a constant stream till the whole was cleared up and one of the captains declared victor. Then two or three big fellows caught father up on their shoulders and started to supper singing: "Come on, my men." They carried father round the house, and stopped at the long table set in the yard and loaded with spareribs and backbones and a dozen *et ceteras*, ending up with "punkin" pie. Scarcely was the supper over before one of them took his banjo and another began to "pat juber" and some to dance. And for half an hour they "cut the pigeon wing" and danced "Jim Crow;" and then, with a great "haw! haw!" they broke up and left for home, singing over the hill as they went. Ah, that was a scene for a boy to remember!

I love the negro. He is not to blame for his ignorance and many of his vices to which he seems addicted. Some of our meanest men in the South and some meaner ones still from the North are the responsible parties. And I sincerely pray our common Father in heaven to raise up wise helpers for our brother in black in his transition state.

At the end of our three years at Wytheville

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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we were sent to Bristol. Here we remained twelve years. Of some of the many recollections which belong here I must write in the next chapter, and then I will have reached the point at which I propose to close these recollections already much longer than I ever thought of at the beginning.

## XXXVII

### *TO WYTHEVILLE AFTER THE WAR*



OUR three years at Wytheville in church and school brought us into many tender relations with the people of the town and country around. Everybody was heartily in sympathy with the Confederacy, and many of them had been in the Confederate army; crutches and empty sleeves were met with almost daily. We had all suffered together and now were ready to make common cause in building up the waste places.

Our school was the first opened in the community after the war. The South was full of young women, who had been deprived of all school facilities for five years. Many of these sought our school from far and near. They constituted a most interesting class of pupils; were more mature than the average school girl; old enough to appreciate opportunities. They knew how the storm of war had wrecked and robbed the country, and

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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were, therefore, content with moderate comforts in our school outfit; did not have much pocket money to spend, and knew there was none at home to spare, and so were satisfied with a small wardrobe. Society, sobered by the disasters of the war, did not distract our pupils with overmuch social life. All these conditions were favorable to successful work in the school room, and in the boarding department. Our pupils were modest, polite, studious and easily governed. A more desirable class of young women I have not taught. And here let me say after more than forty years spent mostly in the school room that I beg to be excused from trying to educate a pupil who has a large allowance of pocket money to spend as he or she may chose; or one who has not learned obedience at home. Such pupils are undesirable in any school. They are sure to give trouble in various ways. Let somebody else have them. I do not want to keep a reform school.

When the Conference met at which we were appointed to Bristol, my school at Wytheville had opened and been in session for a month; and as it would have been a great disappointment to the patrons to close it, I determined to

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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still carry on the school and spend Saturdays and Sundays with my people at Bristol. This I did till May, when the school closed, and then brought "bag and baggage" to Bristol.

And now a word about the town as it was just forty years ago. In truth there was not much town there, perhaps some seven or eight hundred people, all told. I had had some knowledge of the site of the town for twenty and more years. It was known as Sapling Grove postoffice, and home of Mr. James King, a Presbyterian minister. Here the lumbering old stage coach stopped to deliver mail, as I, a passenger, was on my way to college in 1847. Well do I remember how the driver disturbed my nodding about daylight, by a long, lonesome winding of his stage horn, a half-mile before we got to the house. The home of Mr. King was on the top of the hill northwest of the present railroad depot. Where the main business part of the city now stands was Mr. King's big meadows. His house was on the Virginia and his meadows on the Tennessee side of the state line. You may be sure that the town authorities have had no little labor and expense in getting a

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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solid foundation for their streets along those Beaver Creek bottoms, where Mr. King's short horns fattened in other days. The Virginia and Tennessee Railroad, running from Lynchburg west, had been completed to Bristol some ten years, and the coming of the road had determined the location of the town. In those days there were amusing reports as to how it happened that the road ever came there. It is said that the road for the shortest and best line ought to have been located to pass near Paperville, two or three miles east of Bristol. But the story runs that Mr. King had plenty of ham and eggs, and that Col. Goodson, who owned the land on the Virginia side, had some fine brandy in his cellar, and that these gentlemen were very hospitable and free with their good things; and it is further said that the engineers, who were locating the road, had a tooth for said good things, and often lodged where they were. Finally some one drove a stake with some strange hieroglyphics upon it, right at the state line where the road now crosses, and the report got out that the Virginia engineers had done it. Now at the same time there was a corps of engineers locating the

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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Tennessee and Georgia Railroad, going from Knoxville east. These were told that the Virginia road would come to that stake, and so headed for that point, to meet that road. Thus, we are told, that mysterious stake settled the matter, and Bristol is there. There is no telling what ham and eggs and old rye may do in locating railroads and a town. Just how much truth there may be in the story, I don't know; but I do know that it would be ungenerous to insinuate that those gentlemen, Mr. King and Col. Goodson, meant anything but old Virginia hospitality, as they entertained their guests. Anyway, Bristol is there, and a great city now, where there was but a hamlet of scattered shacks forty years ago. A city of 18,000 or 20,000 stirring, progressive people.

I found a small membership of earnest Christians worshiping in a little house located on Lee Street, north of the creek where the colored people now have a church. This location put us almost out of town. Like many of our churches in new towns; built out of town on a lot given to us by some one who expected to increase the value of his other lots by having a church near by. And to add

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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to our embarrassment, there was a debt of eight hundred dollars on the house. But we had a plucky little band, mostly of poor people, who had come to the new railroad town to grow up with it.

The Presbyterians were stronger both in numbers and finances, than the Methodists. A noble society of true, good Christian men and women. Their pastor was George Caldwell, whom I had known in lower East Tennessee before the war; a strong preacher and a good pastor. We worked side by side for twelve years, and these years increased my love for the good man. His children are prominent in the business circles of the town to-day. He has been dead for several years now. Among the official members of that church were Joseph Anderson, W. P. Brewer and E. H. Senaker. Men who had much to do in building up the young town, and creating a healthy, moral atmosphere about it. I found here among our Methodist people, Mrs. Lou. Chanceaulme, the widow of one of our Holston preachers. She was conducting a school for boys and girls, doing good work. It was a pleasure to be able to render her some service in her work; which I did from time to time.



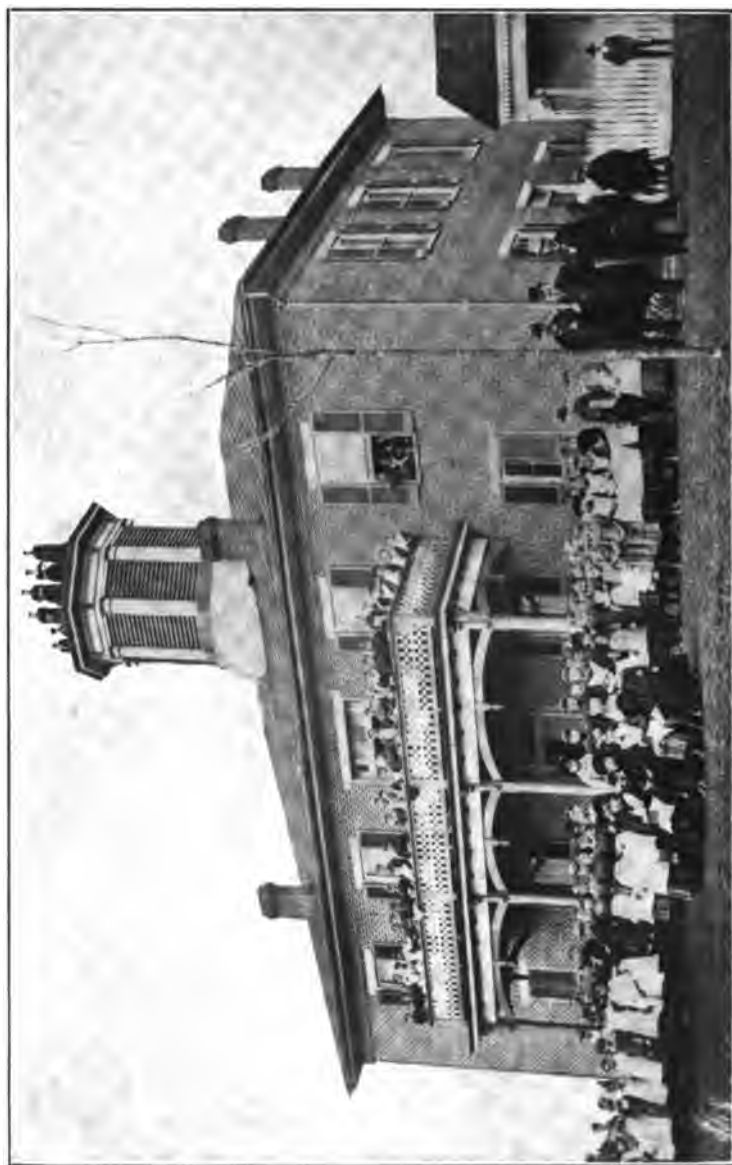
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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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Some of the thoughtful business men of the town, seeing the need of a good academy among them suggested that Mrs. Chanceaulme and I open a school together, under the name of the Mountain View High School. This we agreed to do. I was to be head master, managing the business department, and doing what teaching I could in connection with my pastorate, and she to be lady principal. In making preparations for the school, I rented what was then known as the James King property, which stood on the hill just above where Sullins College now stands. The property consisted of a large old-fashioned family residence and two other good sized brick houses in the yard near by, and four acres of land for truck-patch. These buildings I fitted up, and here we opened Mountain View High School. With three assistants we conducted an academic department, and music and art. We had about twenty boarders from a distance in the house with us. Mrs. Chanceaulme governed the school and taught the advanced classes in grammar, history, etc.; Miss Ruggles, sister of Gen. D. Ruggles, had charge of the mathematics, a rigid disciplinarian and a superior teacher; Miss Emma Cox had the preparatory



SULLINS COLLEGE, ORIGINAL BUILDING



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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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work; and Miss King, art; F. E. Hacker, music. Mrs. Chanceaulme was admirably suited for the work of lady principal; I have not known a better in my more than forty years in college work; an elegant lady of fine taste and culture, had a high sense of responsibility belonging to her position, was deeply pious, always concerned for the religious education of her pupils. During the twelve years of our association I never knew her to make a mistake in her discipline nor neglect a duty belonging to her department. She has been in Heaven many years now. Her only daughter, Miss Nannie, now Mrs. Nannie Walker, graduated with us and was married to Dr. Reaves Walker. I had the pleasure of officiating, with Dr. Wiley at my right hand and Dr. Hearon at the left, the faculty and school all present. Miss Cox's department was very full. Bristol had many children in it then, and there are many mothers there and thereabout who will feel great disappointment if I do not take time to say another word about their beloved Miss Cox. I write of things done forty years ago, when these mothers were little tots in Mountain View High School. They remember to this day the

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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always kind, patient, never tiring Miss Cox, who truly loved her pupils and was beloved by them. The departments of music and art had to be developed in the new, busy town; and the efficient and faithful labors of Prof. Hacker and Miss King soon filled their rooms. It was a working faculty—we all worked, and worked together. And you are not surprised that a school with such a faculty succeeded. The older citizens of the town will recollect that faculty and school with much pleasure, I doubt not.

The day we arrived at Bristol was made memorable by the great eclipse of the sun.

We got in in the morning and went to the King property; the eclipse came in the evening. On the hill just north of us, some scientific gentlemen from the Smithsonian Institute and University of Virginia, had built some solid stands of brick and mortar, on which to rest their instruments for making observations on the eclipse. Bristol was at the point of complete obscuration of the sun, and was, therefore, selected as the place for observations. The fact that these observations were made there gave the name of Solar Hill to that part of the town.

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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About this time a Mr. Johnson, from Philadelphia, Pa., bought some thirty or forty acres of land on the Virginia side (Goodson), a part of which was offered for sale at five hundred dollars per acre. The friends of the school secured three acres for school purposes, and after a few months built a modest, good house of brick, two stories high, with chapel and recitation rooms below and rooms for boarding pupils above. I bought two acres just between the school property and Cumberland Street, and put up a plain wooden house of eight or nine rooms, with dining room and kitchen in the basement. With this house and the upper story of the school building we were able to accommodate fifty boarders. That was a memorable day when we moved into our new houses, planned for our present needs, somewhat commodious and convenient. Up to this time we had been renters and in buildings illy suited for our use. It was a fine morning, and many of our friends came in and joined us in the opening exercises. My, my, how we did all sing, "Praise God from whom all blessings flow." We were now in our own house, about forty boarding pupils with us, and over a hundred day pupils, many of

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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whom were from a distance boarding in town. And the trustees called us *Sullins College*. I knew the board intended it for a compliment to me, and yet I did not quite like it. For although I had worked hard and prayed much for its success, thank God, self was not in it, and I could not see that my name would help it.

About this time our Presbyterian friends began to plan and work for a school for boys and young men. And it seemed right that we, the Methodists, should give the movement our hearty support. The Presbyterians had helped us in our school for the girls, and were sending their daughters to us. And so we went to their "log-rolling," as they had come to ours, and soon the foundation to their college was laid. They named it *King College*, after the old and worthy minister of their church who owned the lands where Bristol now stands.

More about the town later.

## XXXVIII

### *PIONEERS OF BRISTOL*



AMONG the men who came first to Bristol and located in Mr. King's big meadows, were Joseph Anderson and W. W. James. Mr. Anderson bought land on the south side of Main Street, and built a business house on the corner of Main and Fourth, south. The old house is still standing, I think. Mr. James bought the opposite corner in Goodson, and built a storehouse where the Tip-Top Hotel now is. Mr. E. H. Senaker went a little lower down and built on the Goodson side. Mr. Bosang was down on the corner of Moore and Main, and Mr. ——— Saul close by him. Rev. George Caldwell was the pastor of the Presbyterian church, and Rev. Dr. Kincannon of the Baptist church. Dr. James Tadlock was President of King College, his wife and mine were cousins and life long friends. My old army surgeon, Dr. Nat. Dulaney, and Dr. M. M. Butler, were our family physicians.



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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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There sprang up a rivalry between the new town of Bristol and the aristocratic old town of Abingdon, Va., fifteen miles north. A few wealthy citizens of the old town owned the lands about it and did not want to sell off lots and invite others to make homes among them. And the town stood still for many years. Mr. C. B. Cole, the editor of *The Virginian* for many years, saw the trouble, and tried to remedy it. But failing to arouse much public interest in the matter, he dismissed the subject, saying in his last editorial: "There will have to be a few first-class funerals here before Abingdon can grow." Abingdon poked fun at Bristol, and laughed at the idea of any rivalry. But Bristol, like a young game cock, dared to crow and show fight. Their two colleges, Martha and Sullins, caught the spirit and took part in the rivalry. I think it rather worked good to both schools in that it rallied the towns each to its school, and, so more thoroughly identified them with the citizens of each.

The town of Bristol-Goodson began now (1873-1875), to think of new enterprises, looking to enlargement. Their two schools, Sullins College for young ladies, and King

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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College for young men, were moving along successfully; many manufactories had started up all about. Among these was the manufactory and sale of tobacco, in the hands of A. D. Reynolds and John H. Winston which took on large proportion; the railroad from Big Stone Gap was being graded to come from the coal fields to Bristol. All these enterprises well in hand the corporate authorities of Goodson made the next move, and bought the land owned by Mr. Johnson, on the Virginia side, and began to get it ready for market in town lots. A committee was appointed to take these lands in hand, lay off and name streets, mark and number lots, and put the whole in shape for a great sale of town lots. Mr. I. C. Fowler, W. W. James and I, and maybe one or two others, constituted the committee. We went to work, and for many days were busy laying out and naming streets, marking and numbering lots and fixing the minimum price for each lot. I remember some amusing discussions while naming the streets. King street got its name because it terminated at the old King property on the hill; James street was named because Mr. James was the principal owner of property on

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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it at that time; Sullins street because it started at the College; Mary street was named for Mrs. Mary Dunn, whose husband, Dr. Jack Dunn, lived away out there. Yes, it was quite out of town then. Solar street got its name from Solar hill, along which it runs; Sycamore street was named for a large sycamore tree that stood at the crossing of the creek. It was still standing a few years ago. Johnson street got its name from Mr. Johnson, from whom the corporation bought the land; we wanted to perpetuate his memory in the town.

Many other streets running both ways through the lands were staked off and named. After this was done the committee was directed to take steps to put all on sale at public auction. In doing this we agreed upon a minimum price for each lot; and made announcement through the papers and the town and surrounding country of the day of sale; and so began Bristol's first great *boom*. The plan of the sale was to start each lot at the minimum price, if any one would give that, and no one would give more, he got the lot. Every lot sold to the highest bidder. The day of the sale came, and the crowds came to see the show and buy lots. We had employed a

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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regular auctioneer to do the work. But as I was very familiar with the streets and terms of the sale, I was requested to take charge of the crowd and explain the conditions under which the lots were sold, and sell the first lot as a sort of sample. This I consented to do. The first lot offered was on King and Sullins, southwest corner. Four little boys with flags were stationed, one on each corner of the lot, thus marking its out-line at a glance. The minimum price, as I recollect 'it, was one hundred dollars. It was knocked off at one hundred and twenty-five dollars. Then I thought my part of the work was done; but the committee said sell another, and then another, and then another. By this time the buyers were enthusiastic, the crowd excited. And the committee sent me a horse and said, "Here, get on this horse and go on with the sale." A boy brought a bucket of lemonade. It was a hot July day. I rode along, moving the flag boys from lot to lot, selling lots almost as fast as we could move on. That day we sold one hundred lots. The next day we finished by noon, having sold one hundred and forty-four lots, all told, as I recollect the number. What pleased us most was the fact that almost

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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every lot brought more than the minimum price set by us; some of them more than double our price. That was a great day for Goodson. By that day's work I got the name of the "town crier" among the boys. Of course, no one ever thought of any pay for such services. But some one mentioned the matter of pay, as I had put in a day and a half of work which they thought deserved recognition, and one of the committee, Mr. Fowler, said that there was an unsold lot on Johnson street, valued at two hundred and fifty dollars, and moved that it be turned over to me at a nominal price. The crowd voted it lustily. And I got the lot. And the corporation paid for its land purchase out of that day's sales.

A few days after this, Mr. J. H. Winston, who had a large quantity of leaf tobacco stored in the old ware house on the south side of Cumberland street (the old house was still standing a few days ago). The first sale of tobacco was to be made and Mr. Winston asked me to sell it for him. This I did as a neighborly accommodation, and sold the first lot of tobacco ever offered in the Goodson market. I am not particularly proud of my reputation as an auctioneer, but I wan

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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the good people of Bristol and Goodson to know and remember that I was in on the first floor, and at work, when their city was a mere village.

I mentioned in a former chapter that there was an old debt of eight hundred dollars on our church. This debt had been standing for years, much to our embarrassment, not to say discredit. An old church debt following along from year to year, is about as offensive as a dirty rag sticking to a fellow's heel when he walks by. We wanted it cleaned off. The salary paid the pastor was eight hundred dollars. I said to the church, I will preach for you next year without salary if you will pay off that debt. This they agreed to do. I did the preaching and they took the salary and paid off the debt. That was a good year's work all around, for we had some gracious revivals, and the hateful old debt was out of the way.

Then came to us as pastor, the genial, popular J. T. Frazier, a young man then, in the vigor and strength of an athlete, just climbing to the heights of leadership, which he has held among us for the last twenty years and more. Before he left us we had sold the

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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old church, out on Lee street, and bought the lot on Main street (State Street now) and built a good, commodious brick house. It was a memorable day with us when Frazier laid the corner stone and the workmen began to build up its walls. The great and good Bishop Dogget dedicated it at our next college commencement day. It was the only house of worship the Methodists had in the two towns then. How the old hive was swarmed, again and again, until now the new colonies have dotted the city, Mary Street, Anderson Street, Virginia Avenue, and Bristol Mission. In a gracious revival in the new church that year we took into the church many new members, and erected ten family altars. I mention an incident which interested and amused me a little in that revival. I noticed as old Brother Pusey was laboring in the altar service (and he was a good worker), that he would lay his hand on the head of a penitent, stand for a moment, and then either kneel down and go to talking to the penitent, or move right on without saying a word to him. And this he did repeatedly; it was his custom, as I watched him going around. I finally asked him why he did it? He answered at once,

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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“Why, if the top of a penitent’s head is not hot, he is doing no good, and you waste words talking to him; but if it is good hot, he is at work, and counsel and encouragement will help him.” That was the old man’s belief, and he acted upon it. I wonder if it is so; who knows? Suppose you try it.

We stayed in Bristol from 1868 to 1880. Here wife and I put in twelve of the best working years of our lives, laying the foundations, and watching and praying for the success of the college; trying to make womanly Christian women of the dear girls entrusted to our care. Is there any nobler work, or graver responsibility for mortals below the sun? Heaven help the educators of any people! And these were the years, most critical, in the development of our young family. Ah, what years in the life of every home, when the sons and daughters are just budding into young manhood and young womanhood; when the enthusiastic, restless, son is about to try for an honorable place among the men of his generation and must be piloted into some safe channel for his life boat, when his utopian views and dreams must be substituted with the stern fact that:



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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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"Life is real, life is earnest, and the grave is not its goal;" and the good plain principles of truth, honesty and right living, which he got from his mother, must be buttressed by an unfaltering faith in God, and in the literal truth of His word is the only safe guide in all things for this life and the life to come. Yes, here is parental work for thought and prayer. Thus for the son. How for the daughter? What a crisis in the home when she comes out in long skirts, and all the household is proud of her. And how often, O how often, are we pained and mortified to see the mother, who, full of religion and loyalty to her church while her little ones were about her knees condemning all dancing, card-playing and theatre going, now in this trying moment when the daughter is to be a debutant and go into society, that pious mother throws home and heart open to the card-party, euchre-club, the round-dance, the german and to midnight theatre going. Ah, what a pivotal point in any home, a crucial test of the mother's loyalty to God and His church. I think I have seen more mortifying failures right here in mothers than anywhere else in life. May God succor the faith and loyalty of all mothers in such a trying hour. Amen and amen.



**SULINS COLLEGE AS IT APPEARS TODAY**



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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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And now after that bit of preaching, let us get back to our work in the school in Bristol. In the hands of wise trustees and a strong faculty the college flourished beyond the expectation of its most sanguine friends. It was a local enterprise until 1876. That year the annual Conference met in Bristol, and the trustees of the college made a tender of the plant to the Conference. It was accepted by an unanimous vote, I believe, and we became Sullins College of Holston Conference. Then we stepped up and took our stand by the side of our sister school, Martha Washington, at Abingdon. Good Martha looked out of the corner of her eye at us, and turned a cold shoulder for a while, just a little while, and then smiled and spoke pleasantly to us.

Being a Conference school now, we doubled our diligence, and determined to make the best school we had sense and grace to make. The faculty was composed of D. S. Hearon, in Latin and Mathematics; Stephen Hale, in English and Literature; C. E. Dillworth, with some lady assistants, in Music; Miss Bettie King, in Art; Mrs. Chanceaulme, in the Academic Department, and Miss Emma Cox, in the Preparatory. I had the Mental and

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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Moral and Natural Sciences. We all worked, and soon commended the school to a large patronage. And now as I write and think back over those days, a thousand things come up and clamor for utterance. The hearty support and ready sympathy of the citizens of the town; the happy school family, full of innocent fun, on the lookout for bright and lovely things; the King College students and the young men of the town sending us good things to eat, and planning delightful entertainments and pleasant outings for us, aye, those were glorious days. Only once in a while the boys wanted to be just a bit too friendly with the girls, but the girls did not mind that. You have noticed in your time how things of that sort work. If our young friends at Bristol want to know more about these social hours at Sullins, how they were managed and how they resulted, they may ask their neighbors, Col. Barker and Margaret Cane, or Dr. Vance and Mary Doriot, and others too numerous to mention in their town.

We must get ready to say good-bye to the vigorous young city, which like a strong athlete was training for the final grapple with conditions which would place her among the great commercial cities of the land.

## XXXIX

### *AT EMORY AND HENRY COLLEGE*



THE year 1880 ended our official connection with Sullins College. We had been there twelve years, years that covered the dark and stormy days of the reconstruction after the Civil War. But the fifteen years, since the boys were disbanded at Appomattox, had kindly removed the ugly scars the hateful war had made, our people were at peace; and Bristol-Goodson had more than doubled its population.

The trustees of Emory and Henry College elected me president. I had graduated there just thirty years before. During these years I had been in close touch with the school; had once and again been called to preach the Baccalaureate sermons, and deliver the annual literary addresses. Dr. Charles Collins was president when I graduated. Very soon after this he was elected president of Dickison College, and Dr. Wiley became president of Emory and Henry. The war came; the school

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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was broken up, and the buildings taken for a Confederate hospital. As soon as the war was over and many of the boys who had entered the army in their teens, came crowding into the college, with others, and phenomenally filled its halls. Never, perhaps, in the South was there such a rush to our schools as now. The young men all over the country, from their once beautiful homes now in ruins, their millions of property wasted, domestic slavery, which had been so much to them, gone, saw everywhere something to do and hastened to school to prepare themselves for doing it. For several years after the war, the school, under the management of Dr. Wiley, assisted by professors Longley, Buchanan, Vawter and Davis did most gratifying work with a large patronage. The Golden Age of Emory and Henry, so far. But now it was not flourishing as it had done. Patronage had dropped to about eighty pupils, and the old debt of eighteen thousand dollars due the state of Virginia for forty years was a most crippling burden; and some rival schools were calling public attention to our state debt, and asking the legislature to demand its liquidation. The situation was very em-

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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barrassing. Dr. Wiley resigned, and I was put in charge. The board continued Dr. Wiley, and Professors Buchanan, Davis and Sharp with me in the faculty; with Dr. Longley to render such aid as his age and infirmities would permit. Through the following vacation I bestirred myself, representing the college at the district conferences and elsewhere, trying to get the school into close touch with the church, whose sympathy and influence we must have if we would succeed. When the school opened in September, and we (the faculty) were canvassing the field before us, and arranging work for the year, I mentioned the fact that the board desired and expected me to travel and beat the bush for the school; but when I proposed this the other members insisted that I remain in the college, said they needed a president there more than they needed a representative in the field. In this I reluctantly yielded, and remained in the college during the year. Our catalogue showed a small increase in patronage; it ought and might have been much larger. Toward the end of the year Drs. Wiley and Buchanan took charge of Martha Washington College, leaving vacancies in our teaching force. When the



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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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Board of Trustees met at the end of the term, they filled these vacancies by the election of Dr. E. E. Hoss (now Bishop), Dr. R. N. Price, Dr. T. W. Jordan; Prof. Davis was elected to his old position. These men and a good supply of competent tutors gave us a hopeful faculty of strong, harmonious, working young men. And now the new faculty began to consult and devise ways and means for progress and enlargement, things as thought vital to the school. The question was brought prominently before the board. Money and pupils must be had, was the cry on which all agreed. But *how?* was a difficult question to answer, and of great importance. All were aiming for the same end, but different views were entertained. An endowment we want that will best serve the aim and interest of the college. Shall we try for a money endowment and thereby get the pupils, or shall we try to endow the college with pupils and thereby get the money. Two plans, but very distinct, both aiming for the same thing. These views were fully canvassed. There were some of the board who had not forgotten how eloquently Mr. Fulton, the founder of the school, had talked from one end of the Conference to the

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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other the great importance of a school that will meet the demands of the people, most of whom were almost poor, not quite. His cry was "get the boys into school with the best out-fit and faculty you can afford;" he said a school with a small out-fit, but a large patronage, was worth more to the church and world than a school with extensive buildings, costly faculty and a few boys in it. These things he talked by day and by night, from the pulpit and in the thousands of our mountain homes until the people responded with their money as they were able, and Emory and Henry was built. Built and conducted, primarily to furnish educational facilities for the greatest number of boys at the least possible cost to parent or boy. Hence the school was opened in the old ramshackle farmhouse of Mr. Crawford, from whom the lands were bought. A small faculty of scholarly young men, graduates from Old Wilbraham in Massachusetts, I think, were employed at a small salary to take charge. The President, Dr. Collins, got less than a thousand, I believe, and the professors each still less. And these men all worked, every man of them having duties ranging from six in

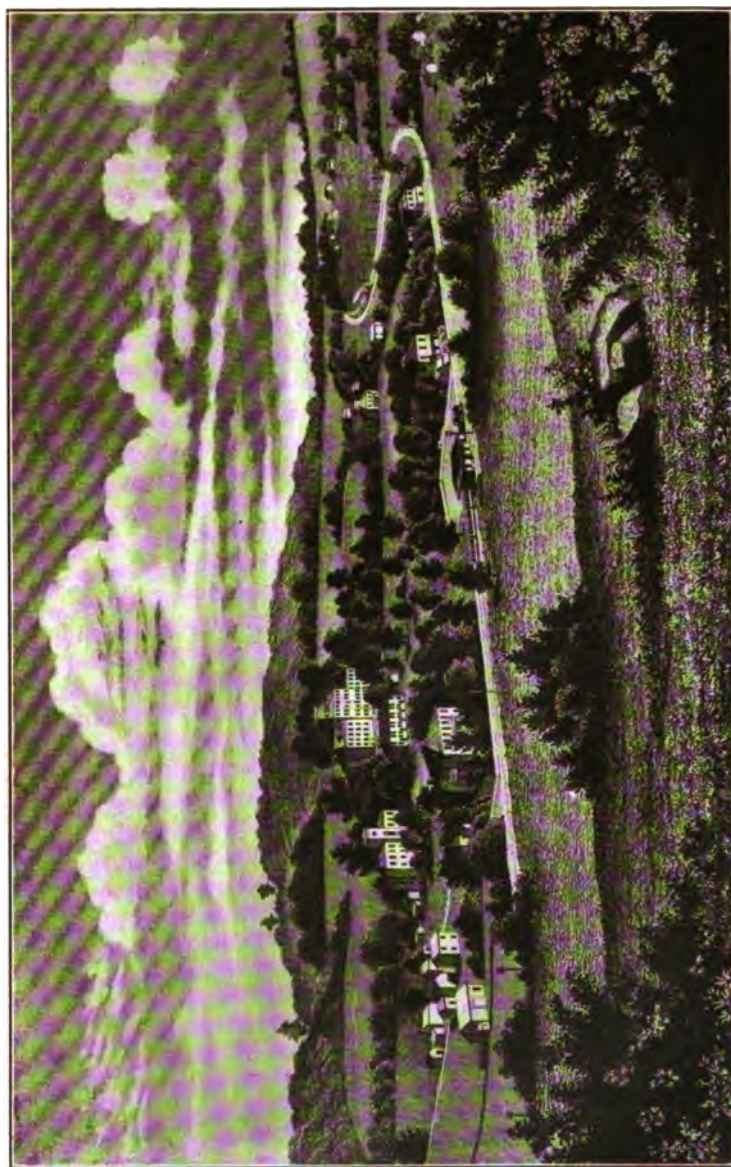
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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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the morning till nine at night. To get all their work in they had two recitations and chapel prayers before breakfast. This faculty was all young Yankees, and I have often smiled at how they were guarded and criticised by T. K. Catlett, and Joseph Haskew, for not shaving and blacking their boots on Saturday night, instead of Sunday morning, as was their custom. But they were workers, no professor sitting in his office reading the *Quarterlies* and the latest books, while a tutor went through the form of hearing the recitation. And adhering to the fundamental ideas of furnishing school facilities at the least possible cost, pupils got board, unfurnished room and fuel for six dollars per month. The boys cut their own wood, made their fires, and carried water from the big spring at the foot of the hill. The underlying purpose in the minds of our practical fathers, to get the boys into school with such facilities as were possible was not forgotten, and a desire to keep close to that fundamental purpose had its influence in settling the perplexing question as to the kind of endowment we would try for, viz.: boys instead of money. A committee was appointed to prepare and report a plan for the carrying out of that idea.



EMORY AND HENRY COLLEGE, 1887



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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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The plan proposed by the committee was about this, as I recollect it: To take notes running from one to ten years, which notes were not to become legal and binding until the trustees should declare that \$25,000 in good notes had been secured. Then the notes were to be legal and bear interest from that date. The interest to be paid annually, and when paid, the receipt was to be good for tuition in the college. At the end of ten years when all notes were supposed to have been paid in full, and the principal in the hands of the college, then and after that interest on the whole was to be used for the current expenses of the school, the principal being held as permanent endowment. The committee hoped and believed two things, (1) that many friends would be willing to give their notes on these conditions, and (2) that these receipts scattered all over the country would be used to help bring many a boy to the school who would not otherwise come. These receipts, or certificates of paid-up interest, could be transferred to new patrons, *i. e.*, not to boys already in school. It was easily seen that the plan would not produce any sudden increase in patronage, but would be

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a growing increase from year to year, and at the end of ten years give us a permanent endowment for whatever amount might be secured. It looked feasible and hopeful. I believed the plan a good one, under the circumstances, and have not changed my mind. With it I went to work. A big undertaking to raise a fifty or hundred thousand dollar endowment from a people who had not been developed on that line of giving. Indeed, there were no endowed schools among us then. The scheme was new, had to be explained, and its practicability and importance set forth and urged. Well, to make a short story of it, I tramped and talked till legs and throat were tired, taking notes ranging in amounts from one hundred to five thousand dollars. When I had gotten what I thought was \$25,000, in good notes, I called the Board together to pass upon their solvency. This they did, scanning each note, note by note, and where they thought a note could not be collected by law, they did not count it. Several notes were thus passed by, *i. e.*, were not counted in the \$25,000. These notes the board still held but thought it not proper to count them, as the board had to certify

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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that the \$25,000 in solvent notes had been raised. Very many of these notes proved to be good. I shall always remember the joy I experienced when the Board gave their certificate that the \$25,000 was secured, and began from that date to draw interest. I then proceeded to raise another \$25,000, which the board passed upon as they had the first. In raising this fifty thousand, according to the decision of the board as to solvency, I raised about sixty-seven thousand in all, the other seventeen being declared *not collectible by law*, and could not be counted. I had been nearly four years at it. There were a good number of boys now coming into the college whose bills were paid in part by the interest on notes. A sort of first fruits of our plan. A few of the notes had already been paid in full, say, to the amount of eight thousand dollars. But according to the plan, only the interest of this amount could be used for current expenses, the principal was to be held as permanent endowment. But money did not come in fast enough (when did it ever), and some began to question the wisdom of the plan and to criticise, both in the board and out of it. This greatly



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crippled the agent in the field. Men who did not want to subscribe any way, would at once begin to plead the unwisdom of the scheme and so dismiss the subject. A fortified field in front and a firing enemy behind was embarrassing. I determined not to try for the third \$25,000, until some agreement could be reached and harmony of effort secured. A divided house could not succeed in so difficult and delicate an undertaking which demanded absolute unanimity of action.

And now there comes a new factor to be reckoned with. Our new female college, Centenary, at Cleveland, Tenn., was pushing to the front, and its trustees were looking about for a faculty to take charge of it. George Stuart was pastor, and his wife and baby were with him. I visited them sometime in April, I guess, and found the men at work on the house, and everybody talking Centenary. The magnitude and importance of the enterprise was talked to me and into me, and I was asked if I would be willing to come and help. A sort of town meeting was held in our church. I attended and heard them talk Centenary. Finally a motion was made, and a formal tender of presidency was made

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by a sort of town vote. By this time I had caught the fever, and said I will come if you will do as well by me as Emory and Henry does. This was readily agreed to. The meeting was as "hot as a ginger mill," and when it adjourned I had almost to pinch myself to see if it "was me." I had accepted the position, an important step without consulting my wife, a thing I was not wont to do.

As the actual amount which came to Emory and Henry through the endowment effort I have no means of knowing save through information received from others. When the business was closed, I was here at Cleveland "heels over head" in work for Centenary.

Brother W. W. Pyott was the agent appointed to compromise with the givers of these notes at a certain per cent. discount, the makers of the notes to surrender all claims for tuition in the college, and so close up the business. In answer to my recent question, as to the amount received, he says: "My recollection is that I compromised near \$60,000 at about eighty-two and a half per cent. on the dollar." This would make \$49,600, which in addition to what had been paid in before Brother Pyott took charge, would

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make it safe to say that fifty thousand dollars came to the college through that plan and effort. It is gratifying to know that the four years footed up so well. Of course, the college books do or ought to show all this up with exactness, both as to the amount and how disbursed. In writing up this attempt to endow the school, I fear I have tired the reader. But it is history, and part of the history of the only great school we have for young men, and ought to be preserved. Hence put here.

## XL

### *AT EMORY AND HENRY COLLEGE*



HERE were many things connected with our stay at Emory and Henry, which constitute a good part of an old man's recollections. And before we say good-bye to the old college, and the blue-grass hills, and the dear good friends there, I record a few of them. They verily come in battalions and ask for recognition in these chapters.

Here occurred the marriage of our oldest daughter, to Rev. George R. Stuart, in the college chapel; the first of the children to marry. If there is one fact that a father always carries about with him, as a kind of pocket piece, it is the marriage of his daughters. God gave us two sons, and these sons two sisters. The marriage of these children must ever stand out in the family history as "red letter days." When the girls married, we all cried. That is the truth, if ever I told it.

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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Not so when the boys married. We cried, not because we did not duly appreciate and esteem the gallant young gentlemen who came all blushing and asked the hands of our children in marriage. No, that was not it; but this: these girls had been all their lives in the old home with us; they had been it's laughter, sunshine and music, and we knew when they were gone the nest would be colder, the nights longer, and the days more lonesome, and we cried at the thought of it. What is home without a daughter in it? When the boys married, we had a jolly good time, for they brought daughters into the home.

Our work at Emory was new in a sense. We had for twenty years been governing and teaching young ladies. Now we were to govern and teach young gentlemen. In many respects the work differed. However, if I were asked which I preferred, a male or a female school, even to this day I should have to say, "I don't know." All things considered, they even up; though they differ. The peculiar natural endowments and adaptions to the divine purpose of the sexes are perhaps as distinctly marked in their minds and hearts as they are in their bodies. And to my mind

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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their education should be planned and carried out with these differences kept sacredly in view. To do otherwise is to ignore and attempt to thwart the divine, as is evident, in the very make-up of man, whom God deliberately created "male and female." She was to be no more of a help-meet to him than he was to be a help-meet for her; mutually dependent. It was not good for him to be alone, said God, and history has shown that it is not good for her to be alone. She talked too much with the Serpent one day, when alone, I think; and then "she gave to him and he did eat." She had eaten, and he must have known, at least in part, the consequences of his act. He was not deceived, but the woman was, so Paul says. The fall had in reality already occurred, morally, and his refusal to eat could not avert its awful effects. They were one; there was no possibility of sinless posterity. Her status morally was fixed, and she gave him and "he did eat," with his eyes open, and I don't blame him for it. There's just that much of the Old Adam in me! To have done otherwise would have shown a cowardly unwillingness to share her fate. Had I been in his place, with all the stupendous issues

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at stake piled up before me at that moment, I should have done as he did. I am glad that the good Father, who saw and knew it all, made Adam's part of the curse fall on the ground, and on the "eating of his bread in the sweat of his face"—poverty, a life of toil and suffering shared with her. This is what he chose to accept like a man, and a grave at the end together: "For dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return." It was left to her and her God to solve the dark problem and meet the awful issues of the fall, and they did it gloriously, without the intervention of man: Jesus is the solution. So mote it be. If some one shall write more theology into this story, I will find no fault with him for it; I guess it is there.

From what I have written above, let no one put me down as opposed to the education of woman. After, having spent the most of my life in the school room educating girls, I am not now at the end going to kick the bucket over, like the naughty cow. I want to go on record for her highest education in and for her God-given sphere, and not out of it. I repeat, in and for her divinely appointed place. I think I have seen some women

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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educated quite out of their relationship both to man and the world; and feminine tastes and occupations were foreign to them. Did you never see the like? Well, I could love almost any primping old bachelor, with a clean frilled shirt on, as well as such an unwomanly woman. From a mannish-woman, good Lord deliver me. Did you never notice that where anything, be it man, brute, or thing, gets out of the divinely assigned sphere, there is no telling where it will drift.

Ben Hale, one of our neighbors when I was a boy, had a pair of young mules which he harnessed up and put at once to the plow—Beck in the furrow and Jule by the side of it. After a few rounds they worked well thus; but one day, by some awkward movement, the mules got away from the furrow, and not knowing what to do, became frightened and started to run away, and would have done so; but Ben said as he pulled them around Beck saw the familiar furrow and at once threw herself resolutely into it and mulishly stopped, and all was safe. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. Everything in its place is good and beautiful; but a very little thing out of



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its proper place may give great trouble. I well remember how the anticipated pleasure of an all day's ride on the cars with congenial friends, through lovely scenery on a May day, was utterly destroyed by the chance flitting of an insignificant coal cinder into the eye. Heaven help us, men and women, get into and keep our individual proper places, and there by the grace of God, render such mutual assistance as will make this life next door to the Heaven of our hopes. Say amen!

While Emory and Henry laid heavy responsibilities and some unpleasant work on us, I have always felt that we (the faculty) came to "the kingdom at a good time." The friendly methods adopted brought into the college many earnest, hard-working young men of small means, whose aims in life were high and noble. We had an aristocracy of merit, both in scholarship and morals. Hoss and Price and Jordan and Davis, with their tutors, wrought to make men and they made them; men who to-day are leaders in the scholastic field, and moulders of the young men of Holston and elsewhere. For instance, Dr. R. G. Waterhouse, President of Emory and Henry College; Dr. W. S. Neighbors,

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President of Sullins College, Bristol, Tenn.; Dr. Eugene Blake, President Hiwassee College, Sweetwater, Tenn.; Dr. Marion Yost, for many years President of Weaverville College, of the Western North Carolina Conference; Dr. C. M. Bishop, of St. Louis, Mo., Conference; Dr. George R. Stuart, evangelist; Dr. J. O. Straley, presiding elder of the Wytheville District; Judge Yancey Lewis, of Texas; Judge Robert Jackson, of Virginia; . E. Humphreys, Ph.D., chemist of the Standard Oil Co., Chicago, etc., etc. Surely the mill was grinding well in those days that turned out such a grist as that. And yet we had little money and a modest outfit. Men had done but little to fit up a great school here, but providence had done much. For here it seems that Dame Nature was in her happiest mood, and lingered, pleased to bestow lavishly, as if beautifying a rural retreat and health resort for her lovers. And here our wise fathers founded and built my Alma Mater, and called it Emory and Henry, now dear old Emory. Reader, did you ever try to describe your own beautiful, sweet mother, who taught your baby feet how to go alone? Let's try. There she is, seated in

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the Piedmont of the great Alleghanies, looking between the foothills to the South, in a vale more beautiful than the famed Thessalian Temple, surrounded by comely hillocks, whose tops are crested with flaming rhododendrons and oderiferous evergreens; there she sits by the spring, whose waters rival the nectar of the gods; her unsaddled feet on a carpet of velvety blue-grass and unbroken glebe, shaded by rock-maples and bedecked by a thousand nodding flowers, where robins come in spring time to make love and nest, and amorous breezes, with wings perfumed from the wooded hills, come to sport in June. *Nature's jewel in a setting of her own selection.*

The commencement at Emory for 1885 is over; I had accepted the Presidency of Centenary, and Dr. Hoss had been elected President of Emory and Henry. The catalogue showed a hopeful increase of pupils; about one hundred and forty, I think, for the year.

In many respects the college had been a delightful home for us. During these years Dr. F. Richardson was presiding elder of the district, and lived at the college; and our old mutual friend and school fellow, Dr. Price, was professor. Thus together we lived and

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burnished anew the links of the chain of a long-tried fellowship. And although they are calling for us at Cleveland, I must have one more word; one other name must be mentioned before we go.

When I, a country boy from the farm in Tennessee, came two hundred miles on horseback in mid-winter, in 1846, to enter college, I found as professor of mathematics a small, nervous, polite young man, whose quick and easy movements were as graceful and courtly as if he had been brought up with princes. A poet born, a scholar and teacher by profession. The boys called him "Old Brit," because he wore a red blanket overcoat when he came in bad weather to visit our rooms at night. Now that I, thirty years later, had come back, myself no longer a boy, I found him still here. The same? Yes and no. The same sweet spirited, thoughtful, scholarly, Christian gentleman, but the weight of many years were burdening his body and slowing up his wiry, cat-like steps. We lived next door neighbors for five years. He passed wife's door as he went to his daily task each morning, and I say it to the praise of his neighborly courtesy, he rarely failed to call at the door and make

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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his early bow, and inquire if all were well; and then a "God bless you," and he gone slipping through the gate to his work on the hill, so long and faithfully followed. I knew him intimately for fifty years and more, and I never knew him to omit an elegant courtesy, or a gracious Christian kindness, or make a grammatical blunder in all the years of our familiar friendship and intercourse. Many men have crossed me on my way, or journeyed with me on my pilgrimage of eighty-two years, but I have not known a purer, truer man on all the way than was Edmond Longley, the Christian scholar and the life-long professor in Emory and Henry College. He sleeps well with his fellow workers on the hill that overlooks the peaceful scenes of his labors, joys and sorrows. So let him sleep. Among his many old pupils I shall be glad to meet him again in the morning, when the day breaks over the hills.

Now we are off for Cleveland. See next chapter.



**CENTENARY COLLEGE BEFORE THE FIRE. ORIGINAL BUILDING**



## XLI

### *HISTORY OF CENTENARY*



AND now as we turn to Centenary Female College, it is in order to give a brief history of its origin. The facts are known to only two living now. They occurred in a conversation between my brother, Timothy, George Stuart and myself, during the summer of 1883 or 1884, in Athens, Tenn. Stuart and I were visiting him in his home. He was an old man and had been a paralytic for forty years. He entered the ministry and joined the Holston Conference (there was but one Holston Conference then), 1832, when he was twenty years old. There were no schools, save the "Old Field School" in his native county, McMinn, which joined the wild territory occupied by the warlike Cherokee Indians. Brought up on the farm under these conditions, he had no scholastic training. But he took his English grammar along in his saddle-bags, with his Bible and hymn-book, and studied it on horse-back



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between his preaching places. This he told me when I started to college. He was fourteen years my senior. A consuming desire to preach acceptably in good English made him a hard student of good books, and a close observer of successful men before an audience. Having himself suffered from the want of an education, he became an ardent advocate of schools, both in the pulpit and in the homes of the people. He talked schools everywhere; and this fact pointed him out as a suitable agent for Emory and Henry College, which the church was then trying to build. During the war he was a firm friend of the Confederacy, and was at one time held a prisoner in the city of Knoxville, by the Federal army. The dear old man was now unable to do anything but sit by the fire and read his book and the current news of the day. But he was well posted on the work of the church and the needs of the people. The subject of schools came up in the conversation, and immediately, like an old war-horse, he snuffed the battle afar off, grew emphatic; and turning to Stuart, he said in substance: "We have our Emory and Henry for boys, and two fine schools for girls, Martha Washington and Sullins, all

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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located in the Virginia portion of our Conference where the war has left our people almost a solid church, while here, in Tennessee, two hundred miles away, are a people deliberately disintegrated and robbed, until there is but a handful of poverty-stricken ones of us left; *and no school.*" And then he added: "You are a young man; see to it; seize the first possible opportunity to locate a good school somewhere among us for girls; we can't live without it." And the old man's lip and voice trembled as he said it. That pregnant sentence fell like a good seed into Stuart's heart and brought forth Centenary College. For the next year, being the centenary of our Methodism in America, afforded the opportunity, and Stuart, remembering the almost sad words of the feeble old man, went to work, raised the money to build, and the beautiful plant stood the pride of the town and the joy of the church. And there she still stands, educating hundreds of young ladies annually, herself the outgrowth of a single sentence of a paralyzed old preacher. He died the next year.

Reader, excuse me if I have taken too much of your time in telling about this brother of

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mine. If you knew all, you would say I am excusable. I owe him more than I have words to tell. It was through his influence that my father was induced to send me to college, and I do not feel like I had yet paid him for it. And still more, he took me into the church when I was but a child. I am glad that it was in my power to assist him in his decrepitude and age, and had the pleasure of marking his grave with a head stone that tells how I loved him. *Requiescat in pace.*

The annual Conference which met in 1883 determined to raise one hundred thousand dollars as a thank-offering, on this the one hundreth anniversary of organized Methodism in America. This sum was to be applied to missions. Dr. James Atkins, (now Bishop) was made agent in charge. But Stuart, then pastor at Cleveland, himself a school man, and who was shot through and through by the conversation had with his uncle Timothy, as related in a former page, looking the ground over came to the conclusion this was the "opportunity," and now and here the time and place to establish a school for girls in this end of our territory. And so he went to work with his

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own people to put hand and heart into the enterprise. And so thoroughly was he convinced of the importance and feasibility of the movement that he gave up his charge and salary to Rev. J. A. Stubblefield, and took the field to work for it. He took the position that it was in the best interest of the church that at least a part of our thank-offering should go to establish a school at Cleveland, Tenn., and that all who so desired should be allowed to direct their contribution to it. The church agreed with him and by vote in the district conferences endorsed the plan and purpose; as did also the next annual conference. So Cleveland went forward with their school enterprise, and put their centenary offering into it—hence *Centenary* College.

The location of the school at Cleveland has always seemed to me fortunate. True, the town was small, say, twenty-five hundred or three thousand people there, but while the war had devastated the town and country around, still the principle business men there were of the old stock of citizens who had struggled through the war together, and were like old neighbors ready to go hand in hand together to rebuild the waste places, a united

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citizenship. And topographically the location is fortunate, being right on an elevation which constitutes a great break-water, here in the mountains. Within three miles of the town are the head waters of the Cuahulla and Big Chatata. The one goes out south by the Caunasauga, Coosa, Alabama and Mobile Rivers to the Gulf without touching the Mississippi; the other goes northeast into the Hiwassee, and on to the Gulf through the Mississippi. On this divide we are on an elevation which gives us a comparative exemption from those diseases common to the extremes of heat and cold, such as typhoid fever and pneumonia. But little snow ever falls here, and the temperature has been as low as zero but once in twenty years, while summer heat's debilitating affects are rarely felt. The finest climate, take it all the year around, to be found in all the earth. Here young ladies from the far south can come without endangering their health by the rigors of a northern winter; and here girls from more northern regions can find the finest winter climate; coming to us about the middle of September, when the birds begin to hunt their way toward a more genial clime, and

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returning about the last of May or first of June, when nature prompts the snow birds to hie away to the mountains. Here in the broad valley of the Tennessee River between the Cumberland Mountains on the north and west, and the Great Smokies and the historic Blue Ridge on the east and south, we are defended from the snow storms and blizzards which come from the north and east by the high Cumberland, whose broad table top, forty miles wide and two thousand feet above sea level, over and across which winter storms rarely ever come; and here, the pure air of the Smokies and Blue Ridge, whose succession of mountain ranges extend for fifty miles, filts out the heat and malaria that may come from the frog-filled swamp and lagoons on the south and east, and gives us a purified, sterilized atmosphere. It was here the chiefs of the proud Cherokees had their homes. The whole country from the Nolichucky, which they called the Nonachunkee, was theirs to select from for two hundred miles southwest, and they chose this region. Here lived the Nabobs of their tribe; the Walkers, the Rosses, the Vans and the Ridges, in the days of their glory. And it was the surrender of

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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this Paradise of the Red Man that made them so reluctant to go west, and no wonder. Their names are upon our streams and mountains and towns. Walker's Valley, Van's Valley, Rossville, where still stands the house chief John Ross built. I spent a night in it some time ago and slept in Ross' room. My curiosity was aroused; I went peeping about, inspecting the house, its location, construction, material, workmanship, etc. I put things together and went to guessing. The house stands facing the celebrated Look-out Point, purposely (I guess) from which signals (I guess) were given (I guess) having specific meanings (I guess) and were read by him sitting in his door (I guess). It is made of wood, weatherboarded and ceiled. I noted that the ceiling was made of planks ten or twelve inches wide, and notwithstanding this great width, and the many years it had been built, I could with some difficulty find the joints between them, so thoroughly had the lumber been dried and so skillfully put together. The mantel was very large and most elaborately hand-carved. It was a piece of extraordinary work. No savage did it. The spring of water was at the back door.

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Van had a large brick house, on a fine farm. I have seen both. The Walkers, Jack, Sr., and Jack, Jr., lived in a good frame house on the best farm, perhaps, in Bradley County, three miles east of Cleveland, in the celebrated Walker's Valley. The old house stood until about two years ago—it was taken down by Mr. George Fain, who built a fine house on the same spot. The chiefs are buried, they say, in the north corner of the yard. These chiefs were half-breeds, but married white women mostly, and built good homes for them here.

Now to this favored location we turn, we, *i. e.*, wife, daughter and I. That was all the *we* left. The sons were in Knoxville, the other, Mrs. George Stuart, was already at Cleveland. A chartered box car was used, to take the two mules and the cow, and such other things as could be packed about them. A servant man took charge of the car, June 23, 1885, and started. I followed, leaving wife and daughter to come later when we should report things in case for them. I rented a cottage near where the Kanester house now stands, joining the college campus. The walls of the center building were just



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above the second windows. A rail fence ran between the campus, which was sowed in oats, and the street. Many hands were busy pushing the work on the college building. It was interesting to all how some of the old citizens came daily to see how the walls were going up, all anxious to get the house ready to open school in the fall. The faculty was now organized, composed of Stuart, Stubblefield and myself, all graduates of Emory, and all experienced teachers, to take the advanced classes in the literary department; Mrs. J. A. Stubblefield, a graduate of Montgomery College of Virginia, English literature and French; Miss Emma Cox, who had charge of the preparatory department in Sullins for years, came to us in the same position; Miss Minnie Stowe, of the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music, had charge of the music, assisted by Miss Barshie Stuart; Miss Oliver had art. Stuart, Stubblefield and I traveled during the summer months, in interest of the school, Tennessee, Georgia, Alabama and Mississippi, trying to stir up an interest in female education and in Centenary College. We opened school in the large parlor in the center building Sept. 16, 1885, while the workmen were covering the back

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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verandas, much to our annoyance, with the sound of hammers. We had four boarders, but had to get the neighbors to keep them till we could make room for them in the college.

That was a memorable day in Cleveland, September 16, 1885, when we opened Centenary Female College, just twenty-five years ago. A proud day for the good men and women who had stood by the enterprise and done so much to build and equip the plant. A sort of first fruit for their many labors, a partial realization of their cherished hopes. How vividly that day and hour come up and the men and women who took part in those opening exercises. How they walked through the halls and around the building after the songs and talks and prayers were over, suggesting and planning improvements. I'll never forget. Most of them were past middle life, wise and thoughtful. And now I hesitate to attempt farther to write up the day, for though many pleasant things come up, there comes constantly the sad fact, that of those who had labored most for the school and rejoiced most on that glad day, many have passed into the great beyond. I am moved out of grateful remembrance of their

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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liberality and loyalty to the school to write a few names that must ever be kept on Centenary's honor roll: C. L. Hardwick, John H. Parker, Judge John B. Hoyle, John Goodner, P. B. Mayfield, Dr. G. A. Long, Mrs. Sarah Johnston and Mrs. Mary Tucker. These, all save Mrs. Johnston have gone to join the silent thousands in the "mysterious relms of shade." And now, kind reader, there are two other names that belong to this list, and should be recorded here. They were both members of the original school family, met and worked with us, prayed and planned for the best interest of all. One was the bright, happy, successful teacher of French and literature; she brought from her native state the best blood of her Virginia ancestry, became the young wife of Prof. J. A. Stubblefield, and for almost a score of years held place as an influential and controlling member of the faculty in the college. A graceful writer, an elegant reader, an active and earnest worker in church enterprises, she was much in vogue at the women's missionary societies, and literary clubs. Her long and faithful services constitute a permanent part of Centenary history. After a protracted illness

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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she fell asleep in Jesus just a few weeks ago. (I write February, 1910). She was the first and only member of the original faculty who has died. We buried her here with our other dead on the high western hill.

Of the other, what shall I say? She was the mother in the school family, unostentatious, silent, but motherly. With a watchful eye and tender solicitude she cared for each school girl as if she had been her own daughter, taking the homesick ones to her own room and pantry for a caress and cooky. She knew the virtue of a handful of cookies on a school girl. She was the best cook in the world, could outcook my mother. She was a descendant of that old stock of sturdy Scotch-Irish, who had much to do in making the great state of Pennsylvania what it is. In the diplomatic arts of modern society she was not an adept; knew not how to seem to be what she was not; said yes, and no, and meant what she said. She loved, and read her Bible, prayed much, cared and worked for the church, was brought up a Blue stocking, but joined my church when we married; however, like her Scotch stock, she never forgot how to keep the Sabbath and tell the truth—God, in

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mercy, to my many imperfections gave her to me a much needed help-meet. O, how I have missed her in these eight years. She and dear Mrs. Stubblefield sleep together.

## XLII

### *STILL AT CENTENARY*



**W**HEN the annual Conference met at Cleveland, October, 1885, the center building of the college was about finished, and the trustees decided to have it dedicated. The day and hour came for the dedication, the preachers and friends gathered in front of the main entrance. The venerable Dr. J. B. McFerrin, and Dr. R. A. Young stood on the front veranda and spoke to the people. McFerrin had preached to the Cherokees here and hereabouts long before their removal to the west, and Dr. Young was born just across the boundary line between the whites and Indians on the river above Lenoir. It was a memorable day for Cleveland.

Already we were needing more room, and Prof. Stuart gave himself largely to devising plans for raising the money to enlarge the plant. Finally two of the liberal citizens of the town, viz.: C. L. Hardwick and J. H. Parker,

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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who had already given several thousands on the center building, told the trustees to go forward and build the north wing and they would pay for it. This large liberality set all hands to work, and soon the Hardwick and Parker wing was completed. This gave us the fine chapel and many rooms for boarders. How we did spread out now, and take possession of our new quarters. But in less than four years there was demand for more room. And Mr. Stuart undertook to raise the funds to build the south wing, and make additions to the dining-room and kitchen. Cleveland had done about all they could do, having given the seven acres on which the house stood, and four-fifths already invested in buildings and furniture; he felt that he must find help somewhere else. He went to Nashville and found an East Tennessean, who though occupied with the management of complicated interests, had not lost his love for his native hills and the plain, honest people who lived among them. And he said: "Put up the additions you need and I will give you ten thousand dollars to help pay for them," and the William Morrow wing went up. Dr. Morrow's liberality delighted us all, and so stirred the hearts



**CENTENARY COLLEGE, AFTER THE FIRE, AS IT APPEARS TODAY**





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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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of other friends that we soon had money enough to make the improvements needed. And now we had a superior school plant. The house was three hundred and seventeen feet long, built of brick throughout, the center four stories high, and the wings three, double verandas on the front, running the entire length and across the south end, and on the back five short verandas with a stairway down from each for escapes in time of danger. Suitable rooms for every department of work, well lighted and ventilated. In a word, Centenary was ample, and equipt for first-class work.

We had no graduates the first year. But we closed out the year with an attractive ending, running through two or three days. A children's day, a reader's contest, an art exhibition, a Baccalaureate Sunday, with Dr. Candler (Bishop) in the morning, and a missionary service at night. A musical concert Monday night. You see we were putting on college ways already. And being the first college ending the good people had among them, they were out in great crowds at every service.

The second year we had two graduates, Miss Amelia McCullie, and Miss Annie Win-

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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ton Sullins, our youngest daughter, and the last child to graduate. Just before we went onto the rostrum to confer the diplomas, Annie said: "Father, I want to be the first pupil to whom you give a diploma in Centenary." At the moment of delivering the diplomas, I remembered the child's innocent request, so while holding both the diplomas in my hand I delivered her's first. It was our custom to have our friends spend an evening with us in the college every now and then. The entertainments were music, elocution, and calisthenics, by the school. These evenings were pleasing and profitable, only it gave us some trouble to keep the boys from being too friendly and staying too long after the program was out. I recall an interesting little incident that occurred on one of these evenings. Among the pupils were two sisters, the daughters of one of our missionaries to the Choctaw Indians, Brother Lyle. I think he went from one of the Georgia Conferences, and had now been out there many years. He heard of our school through Sam Jones, who had two daughters with us then. Brother Lyle wrote us about educating his daughters, said they had learned Choctaw, but he wanted them to

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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learn English, etc. The mother brought the two girls; we secured two rooms in the home of a neighbor close to the college for their use. Lyle remained with his charge, and sent his wife from time to time what he could spare out of his small missionary allowance. The girls though pure white, had many Choctaw ways about them, having lived so long among them. Minnie and Jessie were good religious girls, with good minds, and took to their books at once. Well, one evening when friends were with us being entertained with music, and the regular program was ended, we had the audience wait a moment. I gave a short account of Brother Lyle's missionary labors among the Choctaws, and told them that two of his daughters were with us, and asked the girls to come onto the stage and sing a Choctaw song for their friends. And what do you think, reader, those girls never said that they were not "in good voice" to-night, nor that they did not have their music, nor make any other senseless speech, and wait to be assured that it would be a great pleasure to the audience if they would sing. No, none of that. But they got their Choctaw hymn book, and came at once onto the rostrum and sang,

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"Come Thou Fount of Every blessing," to the old tune of Greenville. My, my, how the people did enjoy it. Why not a Choctaw song as well as an Italian or French song that nobody understands? Those girls finished their course and went back, and the last I heard of them they were teaching the Choctaws English in the public schools. Thank God! no girl ever failed to get into Centenary for want of money yet, and I hope none ever will.

It was along about now that Sam Jones and George Stuart began to work together as evangelists. And it was now some of our Bishops and others began a bitter and persistent opposition to evangelists. It seems strange now that such should have been the case, seeing that now nearly all of our conferences are appointing one or two evangelists to work in their bounds. Well, I am quite sure the opposition was not to evangelism proper, but to the methods, words and ways of some evangelists then in the field. Anyway Prof. Stuart was often with that unique and powerful man, Jones, in his meetings. This, in addition to the work of trying to save souls in these great gatherings, gave him an opportunity to represent the college, which he did

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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and often brought in new pupils. Stuart was a regular member of the Conference, and had been receiving his appointments for three or four years to the professorship in the college. This we desired to continue. But at the Conference at Bristol in 1890, Bishop Keener in the chair, a determined opposition was waged against the appointment. I went to the Bishop and urged the appointment of Stuart to the college, on the ground that we needed him. Finally the Bishop said: "Well I will make the appointment if you will keep him in the college and not let him go with Sam Jones." This we did not want to do, and rather than do, Stuart said he would locate. The Bishop was very determined, as all who knew him will readily believe. And after the Conference had met to receive the appointments, the Bishop beckoned me to him and asked: "What will you do?" I said: "Stuart will locate." "Very well," said the Bishop, "I have him down on one of the very best charges in the Conference, but if he is determined to locate, I must make a change," and then added, "he is down for Chattanooga, and they want him." With that I said, "Hold a moment till I can speak with

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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Stuart." While the Conference found some little finishing up to do, I went to Stuart and his wife, who were sitting in the aisle, and told them what the Bishop had said, and added: "We can't afford to turn the cold shoulder to our friends at Chattanooga, they want you, and they will know that you located rather than go to them; this will hurt; let's just tell the Bishop to go ahead, it will all work right." And so I did, and so it did. At the end of that year, Conference at Chattanooga, Stuart located, and came to Cleveland to make headquarters while he traveled with Jones.

This robbed us of one of the original trio. But the vacancy was filled by the election of R. E. Humphreys, an A. M. of Emory and Henry, and a schoolmate of Stuart. His wife was a graduate of Hiwassee College, and daughter of Dr. Brunner, president of the college. This scholarly young couple of vigorous workers rounded out our teaching force nicely. We continued this way for several years, the school very prosperous.

I was now more than seventy years old, no longer suited to the active work and wearing responsibility of president. Fortunately, Dr.

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J. A. Stubblefield, who had been with the college from its very beginning, leased the property and took charge of the school. I remained with him in the nominal relation of Senior President. Students crowded in, and there was demand for more room for them. So wife and I gave up our apartments in the college and took rooms with Stuart and family on Ocoee street, where Mrs. L. Eldridge now lives. The school flourished under the wise management of Dr. Stubblefield and wife, never better, perhaps.

As we moved out of the college there came to wife and me for the first time the fact that we had come to that point in life where we must "decrease and others increase," and we needed the Baptists' grace to be able to say with him "I rejoice." We had been for more than forty years almost entirely in colleges, with the sunshine and laughter of young life about us, and we loved it. And now, say or do what we might, the unwelcome fact came up that we must retire. We did not feel the decrepitude of age much, though our steps were slower and more cautiously taken; this did not grieve us, but to feel that we were, hereafter, to be left out of the active working forces



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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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among our fellowmen, as a sort of useless worn out piece, laid aside, to rust in the rubbish heap, was a sore trial. However, just here Stuart and his wife came to us and said: "We need you in our family; come, you and mother, and take charge while George is away." That made us feel better, to be told that we were needed, could be useful still. George was away most of the time, and we could help in many ways. To be told that they needed us eased the situation.

It was not long after this that Mr. Stuart bought what was known as the Campbell Steed farm, just outside the corporate limits of the town, and a half-mile from the college, but in full view of it. The remodeling of the old farm house and making additions and improvements, gave us all interesting work to do. Soon we moved to the farm while there was yet but one room in the house we could occupy; the carpenters busy everywhere. We all went into that room, Mrs. Stuart and children and wife and I. They hung quilts over the windows, there was no glass in them; fixed a bed for us old folks on a bed-stead, the rest tumbled down on pallets on the floor. A jolly, memorable night for the children,

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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their first in the country. A good beginning. We had no specific work any more at the college so we gave ourselves heartily to country life. Wife bossed the flower garden, and I the vegetable garden and the fields, the colts and calves, mules, ponies, pigs and dogs. I found, though it had been fifty years since I had taken lessons from my father on the farm, that I had retained much he had taught me. We had good help and farm life seemed to renew my youth. The old farm was much rundown, its renewal was a genuine pleasure; how quickly it responded to good treatment. I was almost a boy again, out on the hills with the dogs, among the trees and birds, with now and then a squirrel or rabbit peeping or jumping about. How the smell of the woods and the early dew on the ripening grain field, the piping of bobwhite, the hammering of the woodpecker on the dead limb in the distance, and the hoot of the owl on the gravelly ridge a half-mile away, brought up the days of my boyhood, and made me think of mother, and supper-time! I was a plowboy again, and listening to hear father call us to "take out." The milch cows were feeding leisurely along toward

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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the bars, habitually, coming to be milked, and the restless calves were waiting for evening meal.

While we lived here in town we spent one awful night, which I must tell about. Wife and I were sleeping in the back part of the house next to the barn and stables. Mrs. Stuart was in an adjoining room, confined with a babe not ten days old. About midnight my wife startled me with a cry saying, "something awful is going on." I sprang out of bed and ran to the side door and saw that the barn and stables were wrapped in flames. Instantly I informed her but said: "Don't make any to-do, we will kill Zollie if we frighten her. Keep quiet until I go in and speak to her." It was an awful moment. The barn was not a hundred feet from the house and on fire from top to bottom. I hushed, and mastered myself as well as I could and went in softly and with as little agitation as possible waked the sick woman up and told her what was going on, but said: "Now you must be perfectly quiet; we will take care of you and the baby." Then I ran into the front yard and with a wild cry of fire! fire! I waked the town. Then went back and sat down by the bed, and patted

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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her on the cheek, and said: "The neighbors are coming and can save the house." The neighbors did come with buckets, and with wet blankets they saved the house. We had no fire department then. No attempt was made to save the barn. We all felt grateful that nothing worse had happened. Next morning wife had a little cry, when she saw the charred and blackened body of her old buggy horse, Charley, lying in the burning ruins. He and two fine Shetland ponies were burned.

## XLIII

### *MONEY AND MONEY MAKING*



THESE recollections must close very soon. Let us have an old fashioned love feast before we part. I want to testify to the goodness of my Heavenly Father to me and mine. Few men have more reasons for gratitude to God than I. And here I confess that I am blame-worthy, for I have not been as grateful as I ought. The poor cripple who lay at the gate of the Temple, rebukes me as he "walks and leaps and shouts" over his blessings. Ingratitude is a great defect in character. Thankfulness ought to walk right upon the heels of Mercy. Among other things I do count it a great mercy that my life-work was settled for me even in my childhood. Never even once did I ever think of being anything but a Methodist preacher after I was twelve years old. This important fact shut the door against all solicitations of the world to follow other pursuits. A want of

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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this settled purpose for life has been a thorn in the flesh of many a young man with whom I have met. As to the making of money, I never thought of it, never tried to make it. Maybe I might have done so if I had tried. But suppose I had, and was now the master of a million, what would I do with it? Well, I *guess* (you see it is all guess work), I *guess* I would pay off all the debts on all our colleges and academies, and then, I *guess* I would go to see what Mrs. Wiley needs for her Home and Training School, and provide for that; then I would give (I did not say guess) a hundred thousand dollars to endow Sullins College; and I *guess* another hundred thousand to the beautiful Centenary College, with this proviso, that the Missionary Board should have the right to keep five girls in each free of cost, on such conditions as the Board might see fit to impose on each girl. After that, if anything was left, I would give it to the Endowment Fund for Worn Out Preachers; no, I *guess*, divide it between the missionary work and endowment fund. Why do I say guess, guess? Well, what else could I say? Who knows what the possession of a million would do for him? The Lord knows, I

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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don't. Well, thank God, I don't need it, of this I am sure, and that makes me as rich as if I had it. Eh? Reader, did you ever try that way of getting rich? Why, I can make a thousand any day by religiously considering the fact that I do not need it, and then I am as rich as the man who has it. Let Dives have it and hoard it if he likes, and in the world to come learn that it is counted against him at a high rate of interest. "Remember that thou in thy lifetime hadst thy good things." The wearing of fine linen and faring sumptuously had not worked out for him an exceeding weight of glory, as some other things are said to do for men, in the Book. Thank God, the idea is getting abroad now-a-days that it is not well for men to die with their hands full; shrouds have no pockets in them. And some things I see going the rounds in the papers make me think of a little game we children used to play called "Robin is alive." Did you never play it?

Then let me tell you how it is played. A company of us little fellows would get around a table at night, set a candle in the center (we had no lamps then). Then the leader would get a splinter of wood, and

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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hold it in the candle until it was well ignited. Now the game began. One of the party would take the splinter in hand and holding it up before him would say: "Robin is alive and alive like to be, if he dies in my hands you may pack-saddle me." Then he passed it to the next, and so got Robin off his hands. Each in turn had to take the splinter from his next neighbor as it came along, and hold it, while he repeated the formula as above, "Robin is alive and alive like to be, if he dies in my hands you may pack-saddle me." The fun in the game came when the spark was almost gone out on the stick; Robin was getting very sick. It was fun to see with what rapidity the holder would hurry through the little formula and push the stick into the hands of his next neighbor when Robin was about to die. He did not want Robin to die on his hands, for then he would have to wear the pack-saddle to the great amusement of the company. It was good child's fun to see how anxious the holder was to get rid of Robin before he died. The fun became absolutely hilarious when Robin got very weak and faint, and liable to die at any moment. Then the holder just blurted out the formula, as it were,



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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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at a mouthful, and crowded the stick into the hands of his neighbor, who half-way refused to take it, and all hands cried out "Robin is dead," and got ready to pack-saddle the holder. Let the children try it for fun.

Now that was a child's game, but I think I have seen similar things in some business transactions among men. Take two cases. First, when death stands near by and looks a man in the face either through age or disease, he begins to get ready for the solemn end, by ridding himself of what he thinks might prejudice his case in the coming future. Second, when the holder sees business disaster just ahead and he does not want to be in charge when it comes, so he throws up his job, gets from under, resigns or sells out. I reckon it is the Old Adam in me that makes me wonder if Rockefeller and Carnegie are just now playing at a game of "robin's alive."

I do not think we pray as much as we ought to for the rich. Their temptations and responsibilities are very great. May the good Lord have mercy on them and help them. There are not a great many of them; the world doesn't need them, one Niagara is enough for a continent, but our God has covered all

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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the hills and vallies of earth with the poor and moderate liver, for "He would have many to be saved."

Speaking of money, and what are the rights of men who have it? There is a question asked in the parable of the householder in Mat. XX. 16: "Is it not lawful for me to do with my own as I will," which is often quoted as conclusive on that subject. And yet it is true only in a very limited sense. If it is to do good, yes; but if it is to do evil, to hurt any human being, then no, a thousand times, and thunder loud, *no*. It is not true that a man can do as he choses with his money. Indeed the uses to which it can be applied, are confined almost exclusively to the body, that part of him which is dirt. The highest and best things of life are not purchasable with it. For example, health, wisdom, a clean conscience, peace of mind, a cheerful spirit, contentment; in a word happiness. You never see the stock called Happiness quoted on Exchange. It is not for sale, yet every man can have it who will *trust and obey*.

Looking back over what I have written above, I smiled at my *air-castle*, and at first, thought I would cut that stuff out, but then

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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I thought that this is the day of air-ships, and so will let my air-castle stand. However, I do not think the building of air-castles is profitable. There is no meat in such a *menu*; if one should feed on it habitually he would have too much wind in his stomach for comfort. I do not recommend it.

Well, seeing that from my childhood I expected to be a preacher, a man of one work, you wonder, as I do myself, why I have not been a better preacher. I suppose several things enter into the proper answer of this question. Some of them are known to me, and those who know me best, no doubt, know many others. One thing is clear; I did not read enough, and often read the wrong book. Ought to have read more history and more biographies of men. Let me commend to my younger brethren the reading of biographies of the men who have made history of the world, good and bad; both in the church and out of it. And for your imitation and inspiration don't fail to read the lives of humble men and women who in their limited sphere made little history, but did wonders for God and humanity; such as the old class-leader, Carvosso, and The

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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Dairyman's Daughter. These last will enter into your life-work as a tonic to stir your blood; they lived on the same plain with us humble men, and appeal to us more than the lives of the world's heroes. And don't fail to write. Get accustomed to putting it down in black and white, and see how it looks and sounds. It will make you accurate, more careful in the use of words. Talking, it is said, makes a ready man, reading, a full man, and writing an accurate man. Now as to the ready man, a word. He is ready, apparently, because he has a large vocabulary, whereas, the very reverse is true. He has but a few words at hand and uses them readily. Did you never see a carpenter who has a full kit of tools, suited to all sorts of work, stop and look over the collection for the exact tool he wants; but an old cobbling farmer, who has only an axe and a drawing-knife and a hammer, never stops; he just grabs at once what he has and goes on. So I think it is often with the man who is called a "ready man"—he just blurts out the word he has, good or bad and goes on. I have been along there, my young friend, and know what I am talking about, believe me. What about writing? Well here I speak again from

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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experience, and need only to say that I am sorry that I did not write more. Had I done so, then these sentences which I grind out to-day with so much labor, and which I never seem to be able to get quite right, would run glibly and smooth as oil, and musical withal; whereas, in spite of all I can do, they creek and labor like a rusty wheel going over cobble stones. Yes, write and *rewrite*. Learn to think with a pen in your hand, as well as on your feet.

And now let me tell you, half apologetically, how I got into the bad habits of not reading and writing. Maybe it will help some boy preacher who may read these pages. It was at the very beginning of my ministry, in my first year, which was on the Burnsville Circuit. And here I found it almost impossible to do much reading or writing; conditions were unfavorable. The circuit extended from Big Ivy Creek on the southeast eighty or ninety miles, to the Lynville Falls on the north, and from the Big Black Mountain, across the Yellow, around the Roan to Rock Creek, almost to the Tennessee state line. With this mountain territory I had to preach twenty-two times in every twenty-eight days, and ride

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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from five to fifteen miles between appointments through the mountains, often on a mere bridle path. And then, the people expected the preacher to be social and talk to them in their homes where he stops, and not sit down and read a book, like a knot on a stump. So what reading or sermonizing I did was necessarily on horse-back, with no chance to make notes. This forced me to learn how to think on my feet, and speak extemporaneously. Things well enough to have along as a sort of life-boat, when the ship is floundering in muddy waters, and a fellow gets thrown overboard, but poor things to depend upon to make a safe voyage. Mark that. Once more, and hurtful; the people were satisfied with very poor preaching, and what is still worse, they often complimented it. Why, they told me I could outpreach Brother Hicks, my presiding elder, and he was a charming good preacher, I knew. Now take notice, that was in Egypt, at the foot of the Bald Mountain on the North Carolina side. And I am told it is still Egypt, and no wonder.

More experiences in the next chapter, and finally.

## XLIV

### *FINAL WORDS*



YOU see my first year led to the formation of some bad habits. I hope it will not be set down to my presumption that I speak to my younger brethren who are toiling up over places with which my experience has made me familiar. I say these things from the vantage ground of years; the right to counsel and advise is a vested privilege accorded to age. The bad habits formed at the beginning of my ministry may account in part, at least, for my many defects as a preacher. Bad habits in a preacher, though they may be small ones, often lessen his effectiveness in the pulpit. I know some preachers, who are among the very best sermonizers in the Conference, but they have the unfortunate habit of not looking at their congregations while they preach. They keep their eyes, I would say, somewhere between the audience and the ceiling, and thereby make the impression that they are not preach-

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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ing to you at all. In a church with the old fashioned gallery, they would hit that part of their hearers well enough. The matter and delivery of their sermons are good, but that miserable habit of not looking their hearers in the eyes, detracts from their effectiveness. Too much *subjective*, and not enough *objective*; dreamy, but not sleepy. And so with other bad habits that are hurtful. Young brother, get some good sensible man or woman to tell you honestly of your faults, both in the pulpit and out of it. The old preachers used to do it. I remember how good Bishop Capers found me at Asheville, N. C., in my second year, reading Gulliver's Travels, how kindly he cautioned me against reading unprofitable literature, and suggested good books, that would be helpful in my work. Brother, read; but mind what you read.

Do you ask more about the way? and is life worth living as I have seen it? As to the way, there are boggy places. You may expect them, and an occasional "Slough of Despond," into which you may sometimes fall, after you have made a miserable failure in trying to preach. I used to get some of that sort of dirt on me before I found the stepping stones



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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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The Good Man had placed there for the safe crossing. Bunyan is right "There is good ground when you get in at the gate."

And now, dear reader, we have rambled over seventy years together, touching some of the bright and some of the dark places, and only some. Most of the way has been untouched. I had not thought, even once, when we started that we would come half so far down the years as we have. But friends kept saying "come on—we enjoy your recollections." (Love, you know, hides a multitude of sins.) And so I have kept on, though hardly conscious of what I was doing, until I fear you are weary from having followed so far. Let us have a few parting words, and then you go on your upward way of duty and service, happy in your work, singing as you go, and I will drop out of the company, and join those "who from henceforth are blessed, and do rest from their labors."

Of the seventy years we have been together, sixty of them I have been a preacher, and received my appointments annually from the Bishop. Fifty of these appointments have been to school work. How many sermons I have preached, or couples married, or

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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children baptised, or funerals conducted, I do not know. It never occurred to me to keep an account. I did keep an account of the number of churches I dedicated, one hundred and twenty-seven in Virginia, West Virginia, Georgia, Alabama, North Carolina and Tennessee. And now, looking back from what seems to be a sort of table land to which I have come in this my eighty-third year, I see many things which I did not see as I came along. Indeed many things to be grateful for which I did not appreciate at the time. And strange as it may appear, I count among these blessings, and not the least, *Unanswered prayers*. Aye, how often I would have poisoned myself, like a foolish child eating sweet meats, if my Heavenly Father had not "known how to give good gifts to his children." Take this memorable example, one out of many. I planned and fought and prayed for the success of the Confederacy for five dreadful years, and gave it every dollar I had in the world, and when it was said Lee had surrendered at Appomattox, I, a refugee with my family from home and state, said in my sick heart: "O Father God is it true, are all our fondest hopes forever crushed, has all this war and waste of life

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## *Recollections of An Old Man*

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and property, all this heart ache and bitter tears been for naught?" For so I felt at the time. But today looking back over the forty intervening years, I say in truth and candor, I am glad He did not let us succeed. Slavery, for which both sections of the country were mutually responsible (keep that in mind), was eating out the very core of our national life, and I am glad our hands are washed of it. But oh, I wish it could have been done at a less cost, both to the North as well as to the South. And yet I see not how it could have been. In the presence of this and many other similiar facts of experience, I have learned, or *am learning*, to say "Not my will but Thine be done," my Father. So much of mercy is there in *unanswered prayers*. Do you ask about *answered prayers*? Well, to dispose of it in a word: They lie all along the way from my mother's knees, through every scene and condition of my life, thick as the stars in the milky way. I have learned much by experience about "effectual prayer," but I need not tell you; you must learn it the same way.

Do you ask: "Is life as I have seen it worth living?" Aye, a thousand times it has been worth more to me than it cost. And

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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this I record with devout gratitude to the Giver of it. I know not what the path may be yet untrod; but come what may in the remainder of the short journey that lies before me, I shall always be glad of the beautiful world in which I have lived, and the sweet companionship I have had here with those I have loved, and the blessed hope, confidently cherished, that in the world to come I shall find and live with Him who died for me, and find again those whom I have loved most here but "lost awhile." Yes, this world is beautiful, so beautiful that I have sometimes asked myself which of all its inanimate things I loved best. And then I go back to my boyhood, and say: "The big sugar tree that stood in the yard, under whose cool shade, on the flat of my back in the grass, a tired plow-boy, I used to snatch a half-hour's nap after dinner before father called "it is time to catch-out, boys."

But I believe Van Dyke is right when he says: "A river is the most human and companionable of all inanimate things." I know it can talk and sing and laugh and run, and that it is a type of human life in all its stages. Why, I have stood at the cradle of our beauti-

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ful Holston, away up in the hills of Virginia and saw it in its pebbly bed a weeping babe, and felt like taking it up in my arms and trotting it on my knees; then it became a rollicking, noisy school boy, going "half-hammon" down through the gorge over the big mossy rocks, and then a sixteen year old girl it went dancing and singing over the rippling shallows, and then it slowed up in the deep channel and moved with the dignity of a grave senator, then dashed off down around the bluff leaping over a succession of ledges, like a boy playing "leap-frog." Yes, for friendship and company I think there is nothing comparable to the river, especially if I have my fishing tackle and a good lively "shiner" to drop just over the bluff where the big bass keeps watch in the foam-covered swirl. Yes, life is worth living.

Would I be willing to go back and try it over again? Well hardly, with no more sense than I had then. It has always been a wonder how I escaped the snares and gins and traps which the "world and the flesh and Satan" set for the unwary feet of boyhood. And I hesitate to try it again. Yes, I know there are many advantages now which we did not

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## *Seventy Years in Dixie*

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have when I was a boy. Our facilities are multiplied by the use of steam and electricity, in railroads and telegraphs, and telephones. Yes, yes, I know that and appreciate it all; but friend, don't you know that the devil and all his helpers use every one of these facilities in carrying on their work, and are just as much aided as the church and good people in their benevolent efforts. The devil rides on the cars and uses the express, talks over the wires. But we have so many good schools and colleges you say; very well, and the Father of Lies goes to college too, and stands very high in his classes, sometimes, and educates many a sharp boy to do his dirty work. The church and Christianity have no monopoly of the brains and scholarship that come out of even our church schools, and much less out of the secular and state schools. The devil is a great educator, and he seems to have money to endow schools, and will do it if you take Jesus out of them. Eh? But there is such an abundance of books now. Yes, that is true too; and the enemy has books by the ship load. I am sure it were better for morality and religion if more than half of the books which are coming out of our teeming

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presses today, and being read by our boys and girls every day and Sunday too, had never been printed. And that is as much to say, the devil has a bigger library than my preacher. Well, but you say our young people are organized into religious bands, in all the churches for mutual assistance and oversight as never before. That is true, and I rejoice at it greatly. But brother, has not the old Tempter organized his clubs by the score, and covered his cloven foot under as many deceptive names as his infernal genius can invent? But you add, we have made long strides morally and religiously in the last fifty years in our great country; witness our preaching president, and pious congress. Yes, God save the mark! Your preaching president denies the divinity of our Christ, and congress licenses the sale of whiskey, the consumer of wealth and the destroyer of homes, and sends it under the government's seal into states which have said by their representatives that it shall neither be made nor sold among us; and show that it cares as little for the laws of God as it does for the wishes of the people; it legalizes Sabbath breaking by running the mail trains through every state in the union, on every Sunday in the year. But we are a Christian

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nation, that is our character the world over. Yes, and strange as it is, our national constitution studiously ignores God and all religion so that from Jefferson to Lincoln the presidents said it was a violation of the constitution for them to call the people together to observe a day of thanksgiving to Almighty God for civil and religious blessings. And our late president said by his action "Take that Lie, 'We trust in God,' off your money." May God, in mercy, save our children and our country from the baleful influence of such leadership and such legislation.

And now, friendly reader, do not conclude that I think a child unfortunate that is born today, for that is not true. I am not of those who say "the former times were better than these." I am no pessimist by any means, but I am not such a witless optimist as to proceed upon the erroneous assumption that the devil is dead or has lost his cunning and hate of God and all goodness. I verily believe, and rejoice in the belief, that the world is getting better year by year, and that a child is fortunate to come into the world when such great things are about to transpire as will characterize the near future, as is indicated by the movements of God's purposes and faithful people.



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But the question, would I be willing to go back and try life over again, is a personal one. Would *I*? May I answer you by giving a little meditation I had about Enoch, this morning? "He," you know, "Walked with God and was not, for God took him." I think on the last day these friends had such sweet talk, that Enoch forgot himself and how far he had gone toward the Celestial City, and the companionable Father said: "My son, it is late and you are nearer My House than you are to your own; come, go on home with me." And Enoch, having finished the work he had in hand, feeling that he had little occasion to go back, accepted the invitation. May I be permitted to say modestly, that having gotten as near to the house of many mansions as, through abounding grace and mercy, I feel that I have, I do not care to go back and try life over again. Let me go on home to my Father's house, and those who await me there.

In these chapters of life's review, I have often stood by the dying bed of dear ones and watched them pass over the river, and in imagination saw them go through the open gates into the City. And I have been much in sympathy

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with Bunyan when Hopeful and Christian entered the gate he said: "Now just as the gates were opened to let the men in, I looked in after them, and behold the City shone like the Sun; the streets also were paved with gold, and in them walked many men with crowns on their heads, palms in their hands, and golden harps to sing praises withal. *And when I had seen I wished myself among them.*"

Well, dear friends, we have had a long ramble together, talked much by the way, seen and heard many things. As we part, let us sum up the whole and ask with old Pythagoras, who lived five hundred years before our Saviour:

What have I learnt where'er I've been,  
From all I've heard, from all I've seen?  
What know I more that's worth the knowing?  
What have I done that's worth the doing?  
What have I sought that I should shun?  
What duties have I left undone?

Running back over this little book of recollections I find it reveals the singular, noteworthy fact that Memory is an arbitrary and capricious creature; is not governed by market values, but has a standard of her own by which she estimates things. You never

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can tell when she returns from a ramble what she will bring back. She will pass by precious stones and gorgeous flowers and pick up a pebble on the shore, or pluck an inconspicuous little wild flower of the field and keep them forever with a childish fondness. She is an extremist, I find; laughter and tears alike please her, all else she heeds not; has more heart than head. And when she gets to Heaven me thinks she will have a lapfull of little Forget-me-nots.

And now, having passed more than four score years of life, and nearing its end, I adopt, as my own, Mrs. Barbauld's exquisite lines:

Life! I know not what thou art,  
But know that thou and I must part;  
And when, or how, or where we met,  
I own to me's a secret yet.  
Life! we've been long together,  
Through pleasant and through cloudy weather;  
'Tis hard to part when friends are dear—  
Perhaps 'twill cost a sigh, a tear;  
Then steal away, give little warning;  
Choose thine own time;  
Say not Good-night, but in some brighter clime  
Bid me Good-morning.

Brother, friend, meet me when the day  
breaks over the hills.

CLEVELAND, TENN.,  
March 28, 1910.







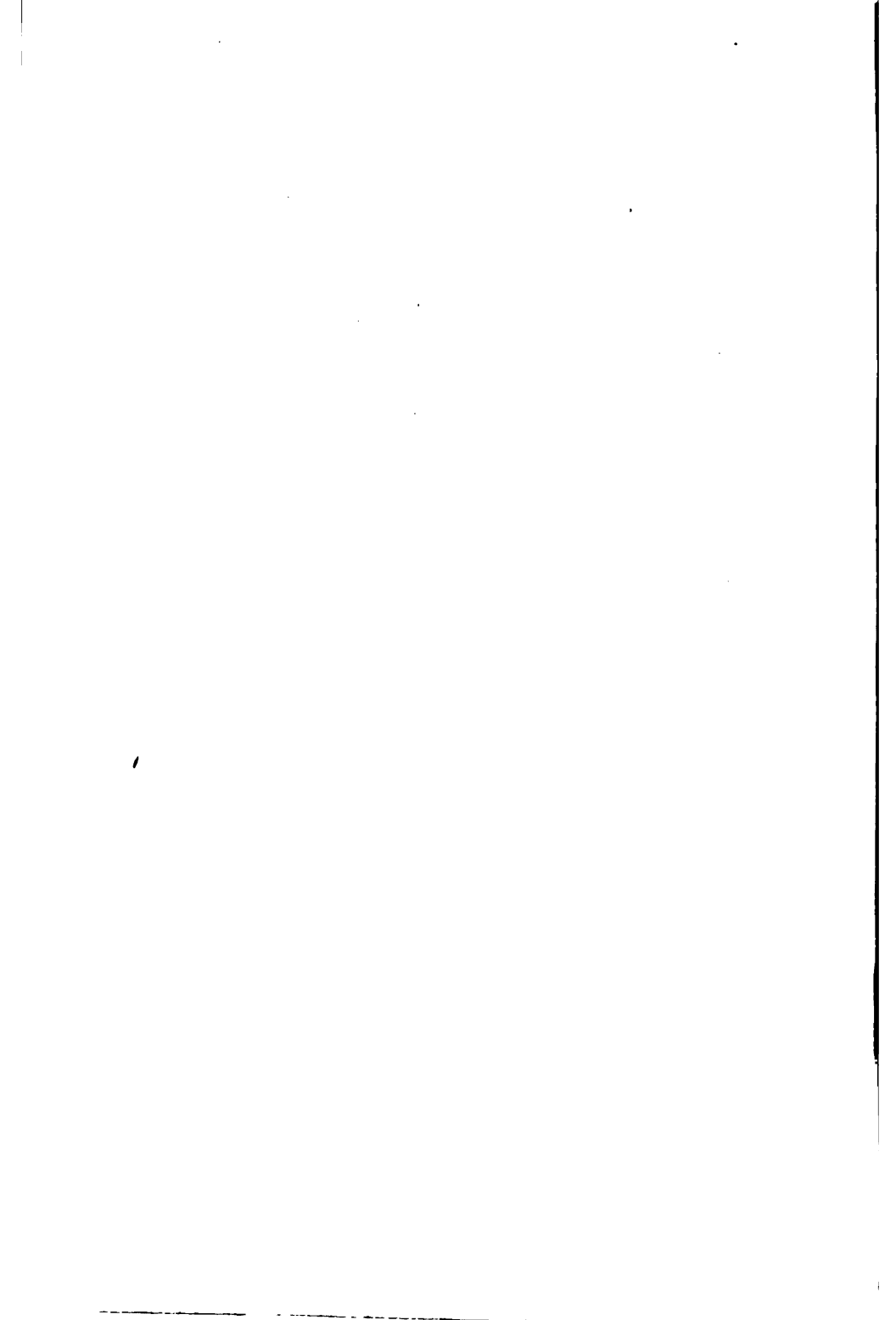


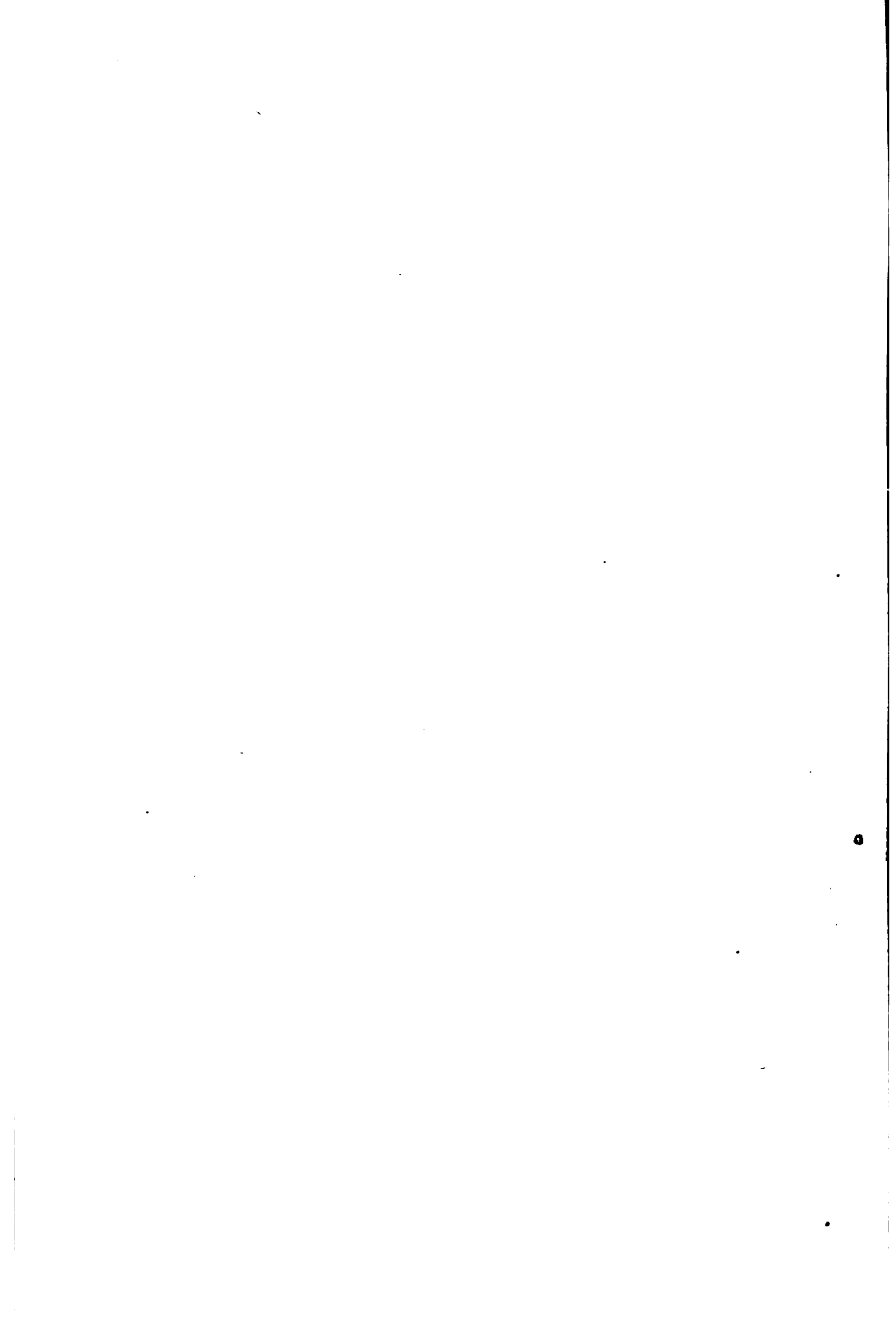


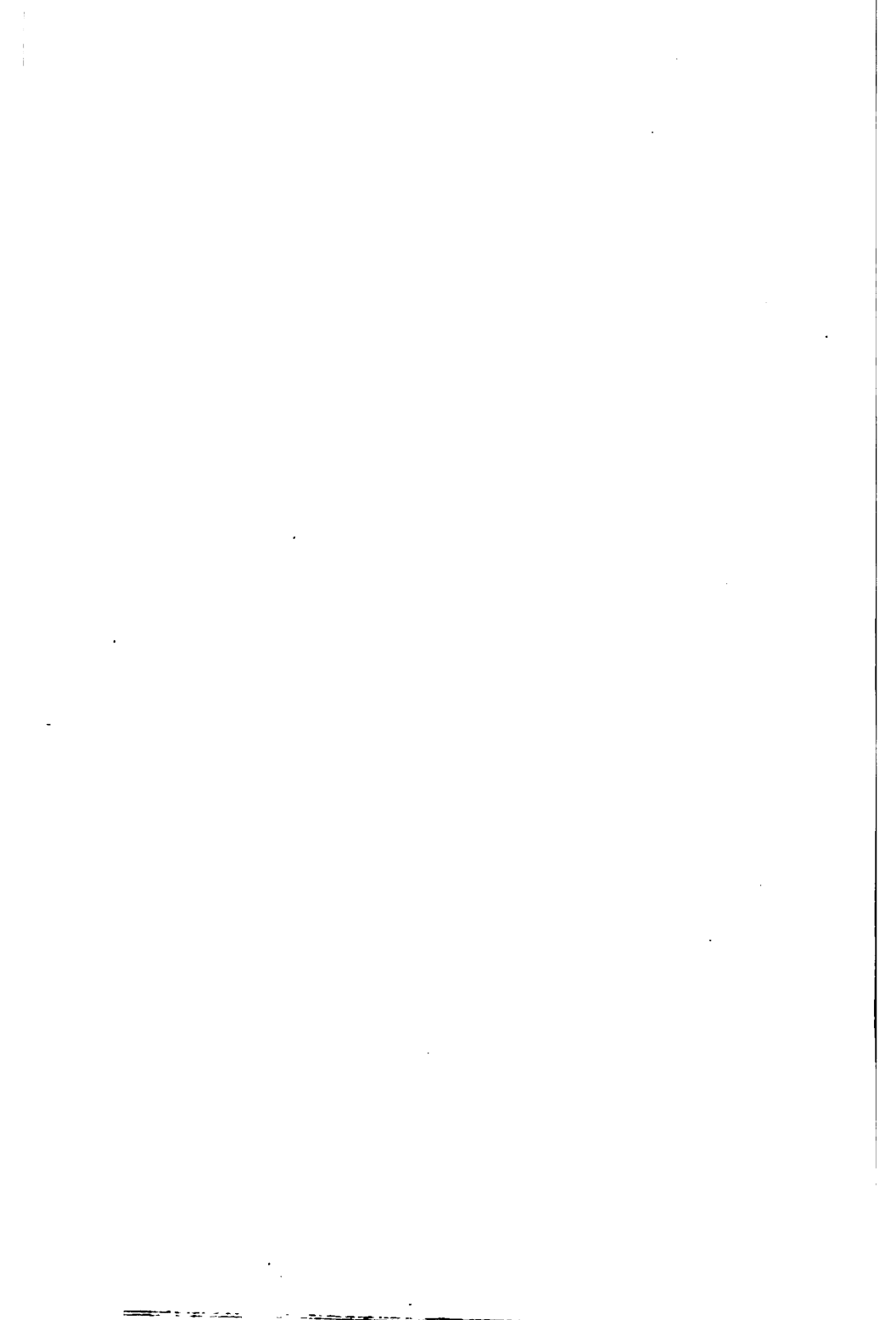












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